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THE
HISTORY

Mary OF Tygran

Miss *Betsy Thoughtless*,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



DUBLIN:

Printed for ROBERT MAIN, Bookseller,
in Dame-street, opposite Foarney's-street.

M,DCC,LII.

THE

HISTORY

OF

MISS BERRY WASHINGTON

In Two Volumes

VOLUME I



By J. B. BERRY

Printed for ROBERT MANNING, London,
in Duncannon, opposite the River, 1800.

MCCCLXX

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THE
HISTORY
OF
MISS BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

CHAP. I.

Gives the reader room to guess at what is to ensue, tho' ten to one but he finds himself deceived.

IT was always my opinion, that fewer women were undone by love, than vanity ; and that those mistakes the sex are sometimes guilty of, proceed, for the most part, rather from inadvertency, than a vicious inclination. The ladies, however, I am sorry to observe, are apt to make too little allowances to each other on this score, and seem better pleased with an occasion to condemn, than to excuse ; and it is not above one, in a greater Number than I will presume to mention, who, while she passes the severest censure on the conduct of her friend, will be at the trouble of taking a retrospect on her own. There are some who behold, with indignation and contempt, those errors in others, which, unhappily, they are every day falling into themselves ; and as want of a due consideration occasions the guilt, so the want of a due consideration also occasions the scandal : and

there would be much less room either for the one or the other, were some part of that time, which is wasted at the toilet, in consulting what dress is most becoming to the face, employed in examining the heart, and what actions are most becoming of the character.

Betsy Thoughtless was the only daughter of a gentleman of good family and fortune in L———e, where he constantly resided, scarce ever going to London, and contented himself with such diversions as the country afforded. On the death of his wife, he sent this little favourite, then about ten years old, to a boarding-school, the governess of which had the reputation of a woman of great good sense, fine breeding, and every way qualified for the well forming of the minds of those young persons who were entrusted to her care.

The old gentleman was so well pleased with having placed his daughter where she was so likely to improve in all the accomplishments befitting her sex, that he never suffered her to come home, even at breaking-up-times, when most of the other young ladies did so ; but as the school was not above seven or eight miles from his seat, he seldom failed calling to see her once or twice a week.

Miss Betsy, who had a great deal of good-nature, and somewhat extremely engaging in her manner of behaviour, soon gained the affection not only of the governess, but of all the young ladies ; but as girls, as well as women, have their particular favourites, to whom they may communicate their little secrets, there was one, who above all the others was distinguished by her. Miss Forward, for so she was called, was also very fond of Miss Betsy. This intimacy beginning but in trivial Things, and such as suited their age, continued as they advanced nearer to maturity. Miss Forward, however, had two years the advantage of her friend, yet did not
disdain

disdain to make her the confidante of a kind of amorous intrigue she had entered into with a young lad, called Master Sparkish, the son of a neighbouring gentleman : he had fallen in love with her at church, and had taken all opportunities to convince her of his passion :—she, proud of being looked upon as a woman, encouraged it.—Frequent letters passed between them ; for she never failed to answer those she received from him, both which were shewn to Miss Betsy, and this gave her an early light into the art and mystery of courtship, and, consequently, a relish for admiration. The young lover calling his mistress angel and goddess, made her long to be in her teens, that she might have the same fine things said of her.

This correspondence being, by some accident, discovered, the governess found it behoved her to keep a strict eye upon Miss Forward ; all the servants were examined concerning the conveying any letters, either to or from her ; but none of them knew any thing of the matter : it was a secret to all but Miss Betsy, who kept it inviolably. It is fit, however, the reader should not remain in ignorance.

Master Sparkish had read the story of Piramus and Thisbe ;—he told his mistress of it, and in imitation of those lovers of antiquity, stuck his letters into a little crevice he found in the garden wall, whence she pulled them out every day, and returned her answers by the same friendly breach, which he very gallantly told her in one of his epistles, had been made by the god of love himself, in order to favour his suit ;—so that all the governess's circumspection could not hinder this amour from going on without interruption ; and could they have contented themselves with barely writing to each other, they might, probably, have done so till they both had been weary ; but tho' I will not pretend

to say, that either of them had any thing in their inclinations that was not perfectly consistent with innocence, yet, it is certain, they both languished for a nearer conversation, which the fertile brain of Miss Forward at last brought about.

She pretended one Sunday, in the afternoon, to have so violent a pain in her head, that she could not go to church: Miss Betsy begged leave to stay and keep her company, and told the governess she would read a sermon, or some other good book, to her; the good old gentlewoman, little suspecting the plot concerted between them, readily consented.

No-body being left in the house but themselves, and one maid servant, young Sparkish, who had previous notice at what hour to come, was let in at the garden door, the key being always in it. Miss Betsy left the lovers in an arbour, and went into the kitchen, telling the maid, she had read Miss Forward to sleep, and hoped she would be better when she waked. She amused the wench with one little chat or other, till she thought divine service was near over, then returned into the garden to give her friends warning it was time to separate.

They had after this many private interviews, thro' the contrivance and assistance of Miss Betsy, who, quite charmed with being made the confidante of a person elder than herself, set all her wits to work, to render herself worthy of the trust reposed in her. Sometimes she made pretences of going to the milliner, the mantua maker, or to buy something in town, and begged leave, that Miss Forward should accompany her, saying, she wanted her choice of what she was to purchase. Sparkish was always made acquainted when they were to go out, and never failed to give them the meeting.

Miss

Miss Forward had a great deal of the coquette in her nature :—she knew how to play at fast-and-loose with her lover ? and, young as she was, took a pride in mingling pain with the pleasure she bestowed. Miss Betsy was a witness of all the airs the other gave herself on this occasion, and the artifices she made use of, in order to secure the continuance of his addresses ; so that thus early initiated into the mystery of courtship, it is not to be wondered at, that when she came to the practice, she was so little at a loss.

This intercourse, however, lasted but a small time ;—their meetings were too frequent, and too little circumspection used in them, not to be liable to discovery. The governess was informed, that in spite of all her care, the young folks had been too cunning for her ; on which she went to the father of Sparkish, acquainted him with what she knew of the affair, and intreated he would lay his commands on his son to refrain all conversation with any of the ladies under her tuition. The old gentleman flew into a violent passion, at hearing his son had already begun to think of love ;—he called for him, and after having rated his youthful folly in the severest manner, charged him to relate the whole truth of what had passed between him and the young lady mentioned by the governess. The poor lad was terrified beyond measure at his father's anger, and confessed every particular of his meetings with Miss Forward and her companion ; and thus Miss Betsy's share of the contrivance was brought to light, and drew on her a reprimand equally severe with that Miss Forward had received. The careful governess would not entirely depend on the assurances the father of Sparkish had given her, and resolved to trust neither of the ladies out of her sight, while that young gentleman remained so near them, which she knew would be but a short time,

he having finished his school learning, and was soon to go to the University. To prevent, also, any future stratagems being laid between Miss Betsy and Miss Forward, she took care to keep them from ever being alone together, which was a very great mortification to them; but a sudden turn soon after happened in the affairs of Miss Betsy, which put all I have been relating entirely out of her head.

C H A P. II.

Shews Miss Betsy in a new scene of life, and the frequent opportunities she had of putting in practice those lessons she was beginning to receive from her young instructress at the boarding-school.

TH O' it is certainly necessary to inculcate into young girls all imaginable precaution, in regard to their behaviour towards those of another sex, yet I know not if it is not an error to dwell too much upon that topic. Miss Betsy might, possibly, have sooner forgot the little artifices she had seen practised by Miss Forward, if her governess, by too strenuously endeavouring to convince her how unbecoming they were, had not reminded her of them. Besides, the good old gentlewoman was far stricken in years;—time had set his iron fingers on her cheeks,—had left his cruel marks on every feature of the face, and she had little remains of having ever been capable of exciting those inclinations she so much condemned;—so that what she said seemed to Miss Betsy as spoke out of envy, or to shew her authority, rather than the real dictates of truth.

I have often remarked, that reproofs from the old and ugly have much less efficacy than when given

given by persons less advanced in years, and who may be supposed not altogether past sensibility themselves of the gaieties they advise others to avoid.

Tho' all the old gentlewoman said could not persuade Miss Betsy there was any harm in Miss Forward's behaviour towards young Sparkish, yet she had the complaisance to listen to her with all the attention the other could expect, or desire from her.

She was, indeed, as yet too young to consider of the justice of the other's reasoning, and her future-conduct shewed, also, she was not of a humour to give her self much pains in examining, or weighing in the ballance of judgment, the merit of the arguments she heard urged, whether for or against any point whatsoever. She had a great deal of wit, but was too volatile for reflection, and as a ship, without sufficient ballast, is tost about at the pleasure of every wind that blows, so was she hurried thro' the ocean of life, just as each predominant passion directed.

But I will not anticipate that gratification, which ought to be the reward of a long curiosity. The reader, if he has patience to go thro' the following pages, will see into the secret springs which set this fair machine in motion, and produced many actions, which were ascribed, by the ill-judging and malicious world, to causes very different from the real ones.

All this, I say, will be revealed in time ; but it would be as absurd in a writer to rush all at once into the catastrophe of the adventures he would relate, as it would be impracticable in a traveller to reach the end of a long journey, without sometimes stopping at the inns in his way to it.—To proceed therefore gradually with my history.

The father of Miss Betsy was a very worthy, honest, and good natured man, but somewhat too

indolent ; and, by depending too much on the fidelity of those he entrusted with the management of his affairs, had been for several years involved in a law suit, and, to his misfortune, the aversion he had to business rendered him also incapable of extricating himself from it, and the decision was spun out to a much greater length than it need to have been, could he have been prevailed upon to have attended in person the several courts of justice the cause had been carried thro', by his more industrious adversary. The exorbitant bills, however, which his lawyers were continually drawing upon him, joined with the pressing remonstrances of his friends, at last roused him from that inactivity of mind, which had already cost him so dear, and determined him not only to take a journey to London, but likewise not to return home, 'till he had seen a final end put to this perplexing affair.

Before his departure he went to the boarding-school, to take his leave of his beloved Betsy, and renew the charge he had frequently given the governess concerning her education ; adding, in a mournful accent, that it would be a long time before he saw her again.

These words, as it proved, had somewhat of prophetic in them. On his arrival in London, he found his cause in so perplexed and entangled a situation, as gave him little hopes of ever bringing it to a favourable issue. The vexation and fatigue he underwent on this account, joined with the closeness of the town air, which had never agreed with his constitution, even in his younger years, soon threw him into that sort of consumption, which goes by the name of a galloping one, and they say, is the most difficult of any to be removed. He died in about three months, without being able to do any great matters concerning the affair, which had drawn him from his peaceful home, and according
to

to all probability hastened his fate. Being perfectly sensible, and convinced of his approaching dissolution, he made his will, bequeathing the bulk of his estate to him whose right it was, his eldest son, then upon his travels thro' the greatest part of Europe; all his personals, which were very considerable in the bank, and other public funds, he ordered should be equally divided between Francis his second son, at that time a student at Oxford, and Miss Betsy; constituting, at the same time, as trustees to the said testament, Sir Ralph Trusty, his near neighbour in the country, and Mr. Goodman, a wealthy merchant in the city of London; both of them gentlemen of unquestionable integrity, and with whom he had preserved a long and uninterrupted friendship.

On the arrival of this melancholy news, Miss Betsy felt as much grief as it was possible for a heart so young and gay as hers to be capable of; but a little time, for the most part, serves to obliterate the memory of misfortunes of this nature, even in persons of a riper age; and had Miss Betsy been more afflicted than she was, something happened soon after, which would have very much contributed to her consolation.

Mr. Goodman having lived without marrying till he had reached an age, which one should have imagined would have prevented him from thinking of it at all, at last took it into his head to become a husband. The person he made choice of was called Lady Mellasin, relict of a baronet, who having little or no estate, had accepted of a small employment about the court, in which post he died, leaving her ladyship one daughter, named Flora, in a very destitute condition. Goodman, however, had wealth enough for both, and consulted no other interest than that of his heart.

As for the lady, the motive on which she had consented to be his wife may easily be guessed ; and when once made so, gained such an absolute ascendancy over him, that whatever she declared as her will, with him had the force of a law. She had an aversion to the city ; —he immediately took a house of her choosing at St. James's, inconvenient as it was for his business. Whatever servants she disapproved, tho' of never so long standing, and of the most approved fidelity, were discharged, and others, more agreeable to her, put in their places. In fine, nothing she desired was denied ; —he considered her as an oracle of wit and wisdom, and thought it would be an unpardonable arrogance to attempt to set his reason against hers.

This lady was no sooner informed of the trust reposed in him, than she told him, she thought it would be highly proper for Miss Betsey to be sent for from the school, and boarded with them, not only as her daughter would be a fine companion for that young orphan, they being much of the same age, and she herself was more capable of improving her mind, than any governess of a school could be supposed to be ; but that also having her under his own eye, he would be more able to discharge his duty towards her as a guardian, than if she were at the distance of near an hundred miles.

There was something in this proposal which had indeed the face of a great deal of good-nature and consideration for Miss Betsey, at least it seemed highly so to Mr. Goodman ; but as Sir Ralph Trusty was joined with him in the guardianship of that young beauty, and was at that time in London, he thought it proper to consult him on the occasion ; which having done, and finding no objection on the part of the other, lady Mellasin, to shew her great complaisance to the daughter of her husband's deceased friend, sent her own woman to bring her
from

from the boarding-school, and attend her up to London.

Miss Betsy had never seen this great metropolis ; but had heard so much of the gay manner in which the genteel part of the world passed their time in it, that she was quite transported at being told she was to be removed thither. Mrs. Prinks (for so lady Mellasin's woman was called) did not fail to heighten her ideas of the pleasures of the place to which she was going, nor to magnify the goodness of her lady, in taking her under her care, with the most extravagant encomiums : it is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that neither the tears of the good governess, who truly loved her, nor those of her dear Miss Forward, nor any of those she left behind, could give any more than a momentary regret to a heart so possessed with the expectations of going to receive every thing with which youth is liable to be enchanted. She promised, however, to keep up a correspondence by letters, which she did, 'till things, that seemed to her of much more importance, put her L——e acquaintance entirely out of her head.

She was met at the inn, where the stage put up, by Mr. Goodman in his own coach, accompanied by Miss Flora : The good old gentleman embraced her with the utmost tenderness, and assured her that nothing in his power, or in that of his family, would be wanting to compensate as much as possible the loss she had sustained by the death of her parents. The young lady also said many obliging things to her, and they seemed highly taken with each other at this first interview, which gave the honest heart of Goodman an infinite satisfaction.

The reception given her by lady Mellasin when brought home, and presented to her by her husband, was conformable to what Mrs. Prinks had made her expect,—that lady omitting nothing to make her

certain

certain of being always treated by her with the same affection as her own daughter.

Sir Ralph Trusty, on being informed his young charge was come to town, came the next day to Mr. Goodman's to visit her.—His lady accompanied him. There had been a great intimacy and friendship between her, and the mother of Miss Betsey, and she could not hold in her arms the child of a person so dear to her, without letting fall some tears, which were looked upon, by the company, as the tribute due to the memory of the dead. The conjecture, in part, might be true, but the flow proceeded from the mixture of another motive, not suspected :—that of compassion for the living. This lady was a woman of great prudence, piety, and virtue ;—she had heard many things relating to the conduct of lady Mellasin, which made her think her a very unfit person to have the care of youth, especially those of her own sex. She had been extremely troubled when Sir Ralph told her, that Miss Betsey was sent for from the country, to live under such tuition, and would fain have opposed it, could she have done so without danger of creating a misunderstanding between him and Mr. Goodman, well knowing the bigotted respect the latter had for his wife, and how unwilling he would be to do any thing, that had the least tendency to thwart her inclinations. She communicated her sentiments, however, on this occasion, to no person in the world, not even to her own husband ; but resolved, within herself, to take all the opportunities that fell in her way, of giving Miss Betsey such instructions as she thought necessary for her behaviour in general, and especially towards the family in which it was her lot to be placed.

Miss Betsey was now just entering into her fourteenth year,—a nice and delicate time, in persons of her sex ; since it is then they are most apt to
take

take the bent of impression, which, according as it is well or ill directed, makes, or marring, the future prospect of their lives. She was tall, well shaped, and perfectly amiable, without being what is called a compleat beauty, and as she wanted nothing to render her liable to the greatest temptations, so she stood in need of the surest arms for her defence against them.

But while this worthy lady was full of cares, for the well doing of a young creature, who appeared so deserving of regard, Miss Betsy thought she had the highest reason to be satisfied with her situation, and how, indeed, could it be otherwise? — lady Mellasin kept a great deal of company ; — she received visits every morning from ten to one o'clock, from the most gay and polite of both sexes ? — all the news of the town was talked on at her levee, and it seldom happened that some party of pleasure was not formed for the ensuing evening, in all which Miss Betsy and Miss Flora had their share.

Never did the mistress of a private family indulge herself, and those about her, with such a continual round of publick diversions. The court, the play, the ball, and opera, with giving and receiving visits, engrossed all the time could be spared from the toilet. It cannot, therefore, seem strange, that Miss Betsy, to whom all these things were entirely new, should have her head turned with the promiscuous enjoyment, and the very power of reflection lost amidst the giddy whirl, nor that it should be so long before she could recover it enough, to see the little true felicity of such a course of life.

Among the many topics, with which this brilliant society entertained each other, it may be easily supposed, that love and gallantry were not excluded. Lady Mellasin, tho' turned of forty, had her fine things said to her ; but both heaven and earth were ransack'd for comparisons in favour of
the

the beauty of Miss Flora and Miss Betsey ; but as there was nothing particular in these kind of addresses, and intended only to shew the wit of those that made them, these young ladies answered them only with raillery, in which art Miss Betsey soon learned to excel. — She had the glory, however, of being the first who excited a real passion in the heart of any of those who visited lady Mellasin ; tho' being accustomed to hear declarations, which had the appearance of love, yet were really no more than words of course, and made indiscriminately to every fine woman, she would not presently persuade herself, that this was more serious.

This first victim of her charms, was the only son of a very rich alderman, and having a fortune left him by a relation, independant of his father, who was the greatest miser in the world, was furnished with the means of mingling with the beau monde, and of making one at every diversion that was proposed.

He had fancied Miss Flora a mighty fine creature, before he saw Miss Betsey ; but the imaginary flame he had for her was soon converted into a sincere one for the other. He truly loved her, and was almost distracted at the little credit she gave to his professions. His perseverance, — his tremblings, whenever he approached her, — his transports on seeing her, — his anxieties at taking leave, so different from what she had observed in any other of those who had pretended to list themselves under the banner of her charms, at length convincing her of the conquest she had made, awakened in her breast that vanity so natural to a youthful mind. She exulted, — she plumed herself, — she used him ill and well by turns, taking an equal pleasure in raising, or depressing, his hopes, and, in spite of her good nature, felt no satisfaction superior to that of the consciousness of a power of giving pain to the man who loved.

loved her ; — but with how great a mortification this short-liv'd triumph was succeeded, the reader shall presently be made sensible.

C H A P. III.

Affords matter of condolance, or railery, according to the humour the reader happens to be in for either.

WE often see, that the less encouragement is given to the lover's suit, with the more warmth and eagerness he prosecutes it ; and many people are apt to ascribe this hopeless perseverance to an odd perverseness in the very nature of love ; but, for my part, I rather take it to proceed from an ambition of surmounting difficulties : it is not, however, my province to enter into any discussion of so nice a point ; — I deal only in matters of fact, and shall not meddle with definition.

It was not, till after Miss Betsy had reason to believe she had engaged the heart of her lover too far for him to recall it, that she began to take a pride in tormenting him. While she looked on his addresses as of a piece with those who called themselves her admirers, she had treated him in that manner which she thought would most conduce to make him really so : but no sooner did she perceive, by the tokens before-mentioned, and many others, that his passion was of the most serious nature, than she behaved to him in a fashion quite the reverse, especially before company : for as she had not the least affection, or even a liking towards him, his submissive deportment under the most cold, sometimes contemptuous carriage, could afford her no other satisfaction, than, as she fanci-

ed,

ed, it shewed the power of her beauty, and piqued those ladies of her acquaintance, who could not boast of such an implicit resignation, and patient suffering from their lovers ; in particular Miss Flora, who she could not forbear imagining looked very grave on the occasion. What foundation there was for a conjecture of this nature was, nevertheless, undiscoverable, 'till a long time after.

As this courtship was no secret to any of the family, Mr. Goodman thought himself obliged, both as the guardian of Miss Betsey, and the friend of alderman Saving, (for so the father of this young enamorado was called) to enquire upon what footing it stood. He thought, that if the old man knew and approved of his son's inclinations, he would have mentioned the affair to him, as they frequently saw each other, and it seemed to him, neither for the interest, nor reputation of his fair charge, to receive the clandestine addresses of any man whatsoever. She had a handsome fortune of her own, and he thought that, and her personal accomplishments, sufficient to entitle her to as good a match as Mr. Saving ; but then he knew the sordid nature of the alderman, and that all the merits of Miss Betsey would add nothing in the balance, if her money was found too light to poize against the sums his son would be possessed of. This being the case, he doubted not but that he was kept in ignorance of the young man's intentions, and fearing the matter might be carried too far, resolved either to put a stop to it at once, or permit it to go on, on such terms as should free him from all censure from the one or the other party.

On talking seriously to the lover, he soon found the suggestions he had entertained had not deceived him. Young Saving frankly confessed, that his father had other views for him ; but added, that if he could prevail on the young lady to marry him,
he

he did not despair but that when the thing was once done, and past recall, the alderman would, by degrees, receive them into favour. "You know, Sir," said he, "that he has no child but me, nor any kindred for whom he has the least regard, and it cannot be supposed he would utterly discard me for following my inclinations in this point, especially as they are in favour of the most amiable and deserving of her sex."

He said much more on this head, but it had no weight with the merchant:— he answered, that if the alderman was of his way of thinking, all the flattering hopes his passion suggested to him, on that score, might be realized; but that, according to the disposition he knew him to be of, he saw but little room to think he would forgive a step of this kind:— "Therefore," continued he, "I cannot allow this love affair to be prosecuted any farther, and must desire you will desist visiting at my house, 'till you have either conquered this inclination, or Miss Betsy is otherwise disposed of."

This was a cruel sentence for the truly affectionate Saving; but he found it in vain to solicit a repeal of it; and all he could obtain from him, was a promise to say nothing of what had passed to the alderman.

Mr. Goodman would have thought he had but half completed his duty, had he neglected to sound the inclinations of Miss Betsy on this account, and, in order to come more easily at the truth, he began with talking to her, in a manner which might make her look on him rather as a favourer of Mr. Saving's pretensions than the contrary, and was extremely glad to find, by her replies, how indifferent that young lover was to her. He then acquainted her with the resolution he had taken, and the discourse he had just had with him: and, to keep her

her from ever after encouraging the addresses of any man, without being authorised by the consent of friends on both sides, represented, in the most pathetic terms he was able, the danger to which a private correspondence renders a young woman liable. She seemed convinced of the truth of what he said, and promised to follow, in the strictest manner, his advice.

Whether she thought herself, in reality, so much obliged to the conduct of her guardian in this, I will not take upon me to say ; for tho' she was not charmed with the person of Mr. Saving, it is certain she took an infinite pleasure in the affiduities of his passion : it is therefore highly probable, that she might imagine he meddled in this affair more than he had any occasion to have done. She had, however, but little time for reflection on her guardian's behaviour, an accident happening, which shewed her own to her in a light very different from what she had ever seen it.

Lady Mellasin had a ball at her house : — there was a great deal of company, among whom was a gentleman, named Gayland : — He was a man of family, had a large estate, — sung, danced, spoke French, and dressed well ; — frequent successes among the women had rendered him extremely vain, and as he had too great an admiration for his own person to be possessed of any great share of it for that of any other, he enjoyed the pleasures of love, without being sensible of the pains. This darling of the fair it was, that Miss Betsy picked out, to treat with the most peculiar marks of esteem, whenever she had a mind to give umbrage to poor Saving : much had that faithful lover suffered on the account of this sop ; but the fair inflictor of his orments was punished for her insensibility and ingratitude, by a way her inexperience of the world, and

and the temper of mankind in general, had made her far from apprehending.

While the company were employed, some in dancing, and others in particular conversations, the beau found an opportunity to slip into Miss Betsy's hand a little billet, saying to her, at the same time, "You have got my heart, and this little bit of paper will convey to you the sentiments it is inspired with in your favour." She imagining it was either a sonnet, or epistle, in praise of her beauty, received it with a smile, and put it into her pocket. After every body had taken leave, and she was retired to her chamber, she examined it, and found to her great astonishment the contents as follow :

" *Dear Miss,*
 " **I** MUST certainly be either the most ungrateful, or most consumedly dull fellow upon earth, not to have returned the advances you have been so kind to make me, had the least opportunity offered for my doing so ; but lady Mellasin, her daughter, the fool saving, or some impertinent creature or other, has always been in the way, so that there was not a possibility of giving you even the least earnest of love ; but, my dear, I have found out a way to pay you the whole sum with interest ;——which is this :
 " —— You must invent some excuse for going out alone, and let me know by a billet directed for me at White's, the exact hour, and I will wait for you at the corner of the street in a hackney coach,——the window drawn up, and whirl you to a pretty snug place I know of, where we may pass a delicious hour or two, without a soul to interrupt our pleasures. Let me find a line from you to-morrow, if you can
 " any

“ any way contrive it, being impatient to convince

“ you how much I am,

“ My dear creature,

“ Yours, &c. &c.

“ J. GAYLAND.”

Impossible is it to express the mingled emotions of shame, surprize, and indignation, which filled the breast of Miss Betsey, on reading this bold invitation : — she threw the letter on the ground, she stamped upon it, she spurned it, and would have treated the author in the same manner, had he been present ; but the first transport of so just a resentment being over, a consciousness of having, by a too free behaviour towards him, emboldened him to take this liberty, involved her in the utmost confusion, and she was little less enraged with herself, than she had reason to be with him. She could have tore out her very eyes, for having affected to look kindly on a wretch, who durst presume so far on her supposed affection, and tho’ she spared those pretty twincklers that violence, she half drowned their lustre in a deluge of tears. Never was a night passed in more cruel anxieties than what she sustained, both from the affront she had received, and reflection, that it was chiefly the folly of her own conduct, which had brought it on her ; and what greatly added to her vexation, was the uncertainty how it would best become her to act, on an occasion which appeared so extraordinary to her. She had no friend whom she thought it proper to consult ; — she was ashamed to relate the story to any of the discreet and serious part of her acquaintance ; — she feared their reproofs for having counterfeited a tenderness for a man, which she was now sensible she ought, if it had been real, rather to have concealed with the utmost care, both from him, and all the world : — and as
for

for lady Mellasin and Miss Flora, though their conduct inspired her not with any manner of awe, yet she thought she saw something in those ladies, which did not promise much sincerity, and shewed as if they would rather turn her complaints into ridicule, than afford her that cordial and friendly advice she stood in need of.

These were the reasons which determined her to keep the whole thing a secret from every one. At first she was tempted to write to Gayland, and testify her disdain of his presumption, in terms which should convince him how grossly his vanity had imposed upon him; but she afterwards considered, that a letter from her was doing him too much honour, and, though never so reproachful, might draw another from him, either to excuse and beg pardon for the temerity of the former, or possibly to affront her a second time, by defending it, and repeating his request. She despised and hated him too much to engage in a correspondence with him of any kind, and therefore resolved, as it was certainly most prudent, not to let him have any thing under her hand, but, when next she saw him, to shew her resentment by such ways as occasion should permit.

He came not to Mr. Goodman's, however, for three days, possibly waiting that time for a letter from Miss Betsy; but on the fourth he appeared at lady Mellasin's tea-table. There were, besides the family, several others present, so that he had not an opportunity of speaking in private to Miss Betsy; but the looks she gave him, so different from all he had ever seen her assume towards him, might have shewn any man, not blinded with his vanity, how much she was offended; but he imagining her ill-humour proceeded only from the want of means to send to him, came again the next day, and happening to find her alone in the parlour,

lour, "What, my dear," said he, taking her in a free manner by the hand, "have you been so closely watched by your guardian and guardianesses here, that no kind moment offered for you to answer the devoirs of your humble servant?" "The surest guardians of my fame and peace," replied she, snatching her hand away, "is the little share of understanding I am mistress of, which, I hope, will always be sufficient to defend my honour in more dangerous attacks, than the rude impertinencies of an idle coxcomb."

These words, and the air with which they were spoke, one would think, should have struck with confusion the person to whom they were directed; but Gayland was not so easily put out of countenance, and looking her full in the face,—"Ah, Child!" cried he, "sure you are not in your right senses to-day: —understanding, —impertinencies, —idle coxcomb, —very pleasant i'faith! but upon my soul, if you think these airs become you, you are the most mistaken woman in the world." "It may be so," cried she, ready to burst with inward spite at his insolence, "but I should be yet more mistaken, if I were capable of thinking a wretch, like you, worthy of any thing but contempt." With these words she flung out of the room, and he pursued her with a horse-laugh, till she was out of hearing, and then went into the dining-room, where he found lady Mellasin, and several who had come to visit her.

Miss Betsy, who had gone directly to her own chamber, sent to excuse coming down to tea, pretending a violent head-ach; nor would be prevailed upon to join the company, 'till she heard Gayland had taken his leave, which he did much sooner than

than usual, being probably a good deal disconcerted at the shock his vanity had received.

C H A P. IV.

Verifies the old proverb, that one affliction treads upon the heels of another.

AS Miss Betsy was prevented from discovering to any one, the impudent attempt Gayland had made on her virtue, by the shame of having emboldened him to it, by too unreserved a behaviour, so also the shame of the disappointment, and rebuff he had received from her, kept him from saying any thing of what had passed between them; and this resolution, on both sides, rendered it very difficult for either of them to carry to the other, so as not to give some suspicion. Betsy could not always avoid seeing him, when he came to lady Melan's, for he would not all at once desist his visit, for two reasons: first, because it might give occasion for an enquiry into the cause; and secondly, because Miss Betsy would plume herself on the occasion, as having, by her scorn, triumphed over his audacity, and drove him from the field of battle. He therefore resolved to continue his visits for some time, and to pique her, as he imagined, directed all the fine things his common-place-book was well stored with, to Miss Flora, leaving the other wholly neglected.

But here he was little less deceived, than he had been before in the sentiments of that young lady: the hatred his late behaviour had given her, and the utter detestation it had excited in her towards him, had, for a time, extinguished that vanity, so almost inseparable from youth, especially when accompanied with beauty; and she rather rejoiced, than the contrary,

contrary, to see him affect to be so much taken up with Miss Flora, that he could scarce say the least complaisant thing to her, as it freed her from the necessity of returning it, in some measure. Her good sense had now scope to operate;—she saw, as in a mirror, her own late follies in those of Miss Flora, who swelled with all the pride of flattered vanity, on this new imaginary conquest over the heart of the accomplished Gayland, as he was generally esteemed, and perceived the errors of such a way of thinking and acting, in so clear a light, as had it continued, would, doubtless, have spared her those anxieties her relapse from it afterwards occasioned.

In these serious reflections let us leave her, for a time, to see in what situation Mr. Saving was, after being denied access to his mistress. As it was impossible for a heart to be more truly sincere and affectionate, he was far from being able to make any efforts for the banishing Miss Betsy's image thence: on the contrary, he thought of nothing but how to continue a correspondence with her, and endeavour, by all the means in his power, to engage her to a private interview. As his flame was pure and respectful, he was some days debating within himself how to proceed, so as not to let her think he had desisted from his pretensions, or to continue them in a manner at which she should not be offended. Love, when real, seldom fails of inspiring the breast that harbours it with an equal share of timidity:—he trembled whenever he thought of soliciting a meeting, yet, without it, how could he hope to retain any place in her memory, much less make any progress in gaining her affection! at length, however, he assumed courage enough to write to her, and, by a bribe to one of the servants, got his letter delivered to her, fearing if he sent it by the post, or any public way to the house;
it

It would be intercepted, by the caution he found Mr. Goodman had resolved to observe in this point. Miss Betsy, knowing his hand by the superscription, was a little surprized, as, perhaps, having never thought of him since they parted, but opened it without the least emotion, either of pain or pleasure:—she knew him too well to be under any apprehensions of being treated by him as she had been by Gayland, and was too little sensible of his merits to feel the least impatience for examining the dictates of his affection; yet, indifferent as she was, she could not forbear being touched on reading these lines:

“ *Most adored of your sex,*
 “ I DOUBT not but you are acquainted with
 “ Mr. Goodman’s behaviour to me; but oh!
 “ I fear, you are too insensible of the agonies, in
 “ which my soul labours, through his cruel cau-
 “ tion.—Dreadful is the loss of sight, yet what
 “ is sight to me, when it presents not you!—
 “ Though I saw you regardless of my ardent pas-
 “ sion, yet still I saw you, and while I did so,
 “ could not be wholly wretched.—What have
 “ I not indured since deprived of that only joy,
 “ for which I wish to live!—Had it not been
 “ improper for me to have been seen near Mr.
 “ Goodman’s house, after having been forbid en-
 “ trance to it, I should have dwelt for ever in
 “ your street, in hope of sometimes getting a
 “ glimpse of you from one or other of the win-
 “ dows; this I thought would be taken notice of,
 “ and might offend you:—But darkness freed
 “ me from these apprehensions, and gave me the
 “ consolation of breathing in the same air with you.
 “ —Soon as I thought all watchful eyes were
 “ closed, I flew to the place, which, where-ever
 “ my body is, contains my heart and all its facul-
 “ ties.

“ ties. I pleased myself with looking on the roof
 “ that covers you, and invoked every star to pre-
 “ sent me to you in your sleep, in a form more
 “ agreeable than I can hope I ever appeared in to
 “ your waking fancy. Thus have I passed each
 “ night, and when the morning dawned, unwill-
 “ ingly retired to take that rest, which nature more
 “ especially demands, when heavy melancholy op-
 “ presses the heart. I slept,—but how?—distract-
 “ ing images swam in my tormented brain, and
 “ waked me with horrors inconceivable. Equally
 “ lost to business, as to all social commerce, I fly
 “ mankind, and like some discontented ghost seek
 “ out the most solitary walks, and lonely shades,
 “ to pour forth my complaints. O miss Betsy! I
 “ cannot live, if longer denied the sight of you!
 “ —In pity to my sufferings, permit me yet once
 “ more to speak to you, even tho’ it be to take a
 “ last farewell. I have made a little kind of inter-
 “ rest with the woman at the habit-shop, in Co-
 “ vent-garden, where I know you sometimes go :
 “ —I dread to intreat you would call there to-
 “ morrow, yet if you are so divinely good, be
 “ assured I shall entertain no presuming hopes on
 “ the condescension you shall be pleased to make
 “ me ; but acknowledge it as the meer effect of
 “ that compassion, which is inherent to a generous
 “ mind. Alas ! I must be much more worthy
 “ than I can yet pretend to be, before I dare flat-
 “ ter myself with owing any thing to a more soft
 “ emotion, than those I have mentioned. Accuse
 “ me not, therefore, of too much boldness in this
 “ petition, but grant to my despair what you
 “ would deny to the love of

“ Your most faithful,

“ And everlasting slave,

“ H. SAVING.

“ P. S.

“ P. S. The favour of one-line to let me know
“ whether I may expect the blessing I implore,
“ will add to the bounty of it. The same hand
“ that brings you this, will also deliver your
“ commands to yours as above.”

Miss Betsy read this letter several times, and the oftner she did so, the more she saw into the soul of him that sent it. How wide the difference between this, and that she had received from Gayland ! 'Tis true, they both desired a meeting, each made the same request, but the manner in which the former was asked, and the end proposed by the grant of it, she easily perceived were as distant as heaven and hell. She called to mind the great respect he had always treated her with ;—she was convinced both of his honour and sincerity, and thought something was due from her on that account. In fine, after deliberating within herself, she resolved to grant his request, and accordingly wrote to him in these terms :

“ *Sir,*
“ **T**H O' it is my fixed determination to encourage the addresses of no man whatever,
“ without the approbation of my guardians, yet I
“ think myself too much obliged to the affection
“ you have expressed for me, to refuse you a favour of so trifling a nature, as that you have
“ taken the pains to ask. I will be at the place
“ you mention to-morrow, some time in the forenoon ; but desire you will expect nothing from
“ it, but a last farewell, as you have promised to
“ be contented with. Till then, adieu.”

After finishing this little billet, she called the maid, whom Saving had made his confidante, into her chamber, and asked her, when she expected he

would come for an answer? To which the other replied, that he had appointed her to meet him at the corner of the street very early in the morning, before any of the windows were open. “Well then,” said Miss Betsey smiling, and putting the letter into her hands, “give him this. I do it for your sake, Nanny; for, I suppose, you will have a double fee on the delivery.” “The gentleman is too much in love,” answered she, “not to be grateful.”

Miss Betsey past the remainder of that day, and the ensuing night, with that tranquillity which is inseparable from a mind unincumbered with passion; but the next morning remembering her promise, while lady Mellasin and Miss Flora were engaged with the beaux and belles at their levee, she slipped out, and taking a chair at the end of the street, went to the milliner’s according to appointment. She doubted not but the impatience of her lover would have brought him there long before her, and was very much amazed to find herself the first comer. She knew not, however, but some extraordinary accident, unforeseen by him, might have happened to detain him longer than he expected, and from the whole course of his past behaviour, could find no shadow of reason to suspect him of a wilful remissness. She sat down in the shop, and amused herself with talking to the woman on the new modes of dress, and such like ordinary matters; but made not the least mention of the motive which had brought her there that morning: and the other, not knowing whether it would be proper to take any notice, was also silent on that occasion; but Miss Betsey observed, she often turned her head towards the window, and ran to the door, looking up and down the street, as if she expected somebody, who was not yet come.

Miss

Miss Betsy could not forbear being shocked at a disappointment, which was the last thing in the world she could have apprehended. She had, notwithstanding, the patience to wait from a little past eleven 'till near two o'clock, expecting, during every moment of that time, that he would either come, or send some excuse for not doing so; but finding he did neither, and that it was near the hour in which Mr. Goodman usually dined, she took her leave of the woman, and went home full of agitations.

The maid, who was in the secret, happening to open the door, and Miss Betsy looking round, and perceiving there was nobody in hearing, said to her, "Nanny, are you sure you delivered my letter safe into Mr. Saving's hands?" "Sure! Miss," cried the wench, "yes, as sure as I am alive, and he gave me a good queen Anne's guinea for my trouble: — I have not had time since to put it up," continued she, taking it out of her bosom, "here it is." "Well, then, what did he say on receiving it?" said Miss Betsy. "I never saw a man so transported," replied she, "he put it to his mouth, and kissed it with such an eagerness, I thought he would have devoured it." Miss Betsy asked no further questions, but went up to her chamber to pull off her hood, not being able to know how she ought to judge of this adventure.

She was soon called down to dinner, but her mind was too much perplexed to suffer her to eat much.

She was extremely uneasy the whole day, for an explanation of what at present seemed so mysterious, and this gave her little less pain, than, perhaps, she would have felt had she been possessed with an equal share of love; but in the evening her natural vivacity got the better, and not

doubting but the next morning she should receive a letter with a full eclaircissement of this affair, she enjoyed the same sweet repose, as if nothing had happened to ruffle her temper.

The morning came, but brought no billet from that once obsequious lover :— the next, and three or four succeeding ones were barren of the fruit she so much expected. What judgment could she form of an event so odd?— She could not bring herself to think Saving had taken pains to procure a rendezvous with her, on purpose to disappoint and affront her ; and was not able to conceive any probable means, by which he should be prevented from writing to her. Death only she thought could be an excuse for him, and had that happened she should have heard of it. Sometimes she fancied that the maid had been treacherous ; but when she considered, she could get nothing by being so, and that it was, on the contrary, rather her interest to be sincere, she rejected that supposition. The various conjectures, which by turns came into her head, rendered her however excessively disturbed, and in a situation which deserved some share of pity, had not her pride kept her from revealing either her discontent, or the motives of it, to any one person in the world.

C H A P. V.

*Contains nothing very extraordinary, yet such things
as are highly proper to be known.*

I THINK it is generally allowed, that there are few emotions of the mind more uneasy than suspense. Not the extreme youth of Miss Betsy, not all her natural chearfulness, nor her perfect indifference for the son of alderman Saving, could enable

nable her to throw off the vexation, in which his late behaviour had involved her. Had the motive been the most mortifying of any that could be imagined to her vanity, pride and resentment would then have come to her assistance: — she would have despised the author of the insult, and, in time, have forgot the insult itself; but the uncertainty in what manner she ought to think of the man, and this last action of his, made both dwell much longer on her mind, than otherwise they would have done. As the poet truly says.

“ When puzzling doubts the anxious bosom
“ seize,

“ To know the worst is some degree of ease.”

This is a maxim which will hold good, even when the strongest and most violent passions operate; but Miss Betsy was possessed of no more than a bare curiosity, which as she had as yet no other sensation, which demanded gratification, was sufficiently painful to her.

It was about ten, or twelve days, that she continued to labour under this dilemma; but at the expiration of that time, was partly relieved from it by the following means.

Mr. Goodman happening to meet alderman Saving, with whom he had great business, upon 'Change, desired he would accompany him to an adjacent tavern. To which the other complied; but with an air much more grave and reserved, than he was accustomed to put on, with a person whom he had known for a great number of years, and was concerned with in some affairs of traffick; they went together to the ship tavern.

After having ended what they had to say to each other upon business, “ Mr. Goodman,” said the alderman, “ we have long been friends, I
“ always thought you an honest, fair-dealing man,
“ and

“ and am, therefore, very much surprized you
 “ should go about to put upon me in the manner
 “ you have lately done.” “ Put upon you, Sir,”
 cried the merchant, “ I know not what you mean,
 “ and am very certain I never did any thing that
 “ might call in question my integrity, either to
 “ you or any one else.” “ It was great integrity
 “ indeed,” resumed the alderman, with a sneer,
 “ to endeavour to draw my only son into a clan-
 “ destine marriage, with a girl you have at your
 “ house.” Mr. Goodman was astonished, as well
 he might, at this accusation, and perceiving by
 some other words that the alderman let fall, that
 he was well acquainted with the love young Saving
 had professed for Miss Betsy, frankly related to
 him all that he knew of the courtship, and the
 method he had taken to put a stop to it. “ That
 “ was not enough, Sir,” cried the alderman ha-
 “ stily, you should have told me of it.—Do
 “ you think young folks, like them, would have re-
 “ garded your forbidding?—No, no; I’ll war-
 “ rant you they would have found some way or o-
 “ ther to come together before now, and the boy
 “ might have been ruined, if I had not been in-
 “ formed by other hands how things were carried
 “ on, and put it out of the power of any of you
 “ to impose upon me. The girl may spread her
 “ nets to catch some other woodcock, if she can,
 “ — thanks to heaven, and my own prudence,
 “ my son is far enough out of her reach.”

Mr. Goodman, though one of the best natured
 men in the world, could not keep himself from be-
 ing a little ruffled at the alderman’s discourse, and
 told him, that though he had been far from encour-
 aging Mr. Saving’s inclinations, and should always
 think it the duty of a son to consult his father in
 every thing he did, especially in so material a
 point as that of marriage; yet he saw no rea-
 son

son for treating Miss Betsy with contempt, as she was of a good family, had a very pretty fortune of her own, and suitable accomplishments.

“ You take a great deal of pains to set her off,” said the alderman, “ and since you married a court-lady not worth a groat, have got all the romantic idle notions of the other end of the town, as finely as if you had been bred there. A good family !—very pleasant i’faith. Will a good family go to market ?——Will it buy a joint of mutton at the butcher’s ?——Or a pretty gown at the mercer’s ? Then, a pretty fortune you say ;——enough it may be to squander away at cards and masquerades, for a month or two. She has suitable accomplishments too ?——yes, indeed, they are suitable ones, I believe :——I suppose she can sing, dance, and jabber a little French ; but I’ll be hanged if she knows how to make a pye, or a pudding, or to teach her maid to do it.”

The reflection on lady Mellasin, in the beginning of this speech, so much incensed Mr. Goodman, that he could scarce attend to the latter part of it ;——he forbore interrupting him, however, but as soon as he had done speaking, replied in terms which shewed his resentment. In fine, such hot words passed between them, as, had they been younger men, might have produced worse consequences ;——but the spirit of both being equally evaporated in mutual reproaches, they grew more calm, and, at last, talked themselves into as good harmony as ever. Mr. Goodman said, he was sorry that he had been prevailed upon, by the young man’s entreaties, to keep his courtship to Miss Betsy a secret ; and the alderman begged pardon in his turn, for having said any thing disrespectful of lady Mellasin.

On this they shook hands, another half pint of sherry was called for, and before they parted, the alderman acquainted Mr. Goodman, that to prevent entirely all future correspondence between his son and Miss Betsy, he had sent him to Holland some days ago, without letting him know any thing of his intentions, 'till every thing was ready for his embarkation. "I sent," said he, "the
"night before he was to go, his portmanteau, and
"what other luggage I thought he would have
"occasion for, to the inn where the Harwich
"stage puts up, and making him be called up very
"early in the morning, told him, he must go a
"little way out of town with me, upon extraor-
"dinary business : — he seemed very unwilling,
"said he had appointed that morning to meet a
"gentleman, and begged I would delay the jour-
"ney to the next day, or even till the afternoon.
"What caused this backwardness, I cannot ima-
"gine, for I think it was impossible he could
"know my designs on this score ; but, whatever
"was in his head, I took care to disappoint it : —
"I listened to none of his excuses, nor trusted
"him out of my sight, but forced him to go with
"me to the coach, in which I had secured a cou-
"ple of places. He was horridly shocked when
"he found where he was going, and would fain
"have persuaded me to repeal his banishment, as
"he called it : — I laughed in my sleeve, but
"took no notice of the real motive I had for send-
"ing him away, and told him, there was an ab-
"solute necessity for his departure ; — that I
"had a business of the greatest importance at
"Rotterdam, in which I could trust nobody but
"himself to negotiate, and that he would find, in
"his trunk, letters and other papers, which would
"instruct him how to act.

"In

“ In fine,” continued the alderman, “ I went with him aboard, staid with him till they were ready to weigh anchor, then returned, and stood on the beach till the ship sailed quite out of sight, so that if my gentleman had a thought of writing to his mistress, he had not the least opportunity for it.” He added, that he did not altogether deceive his son, having, indeed, some affairs to transact at Rotterdam, though they were not of the mighty consequence he had pretended ; but which he had, by a private letter to his agent there, ordered should be made appear as intricate and perplexed as possible, that the young gentleman’s return might be delayed as long as there was any plausible excuse for detaining him, without his seeing through the reason of it.

Mr. Goodman praised the alderman’s discretion in the whole conduct of this business, and to atone for having been prevailed upon to keep young Saving’s secret from him, offered to make interest with a friend he had at the post-office, to stop any letter should be directed for Miss Betsy Thoughtless, by the way of Holland ; “ by which means,” said he, “ all communication between the young people will soon be put an end to ; he will grow weary of writing when he receives no answers, and she of thinking of him as a lover, when she finds he ceases to tell her he is so.”

The alderman was ready to hug his old friend for this proposal, which, it is certain, he made in the sincerity of his heart, for they no sooner parted, than he went to the office, and fulfilled his promise.

When he came home, in order to hinder Miss Betsy from expecting to hear any thing more of Mr. Saving, he told her he had been treated by the alderman pretty roughly, on account of the encouragement

agement had been given in his house to the amorous addresses had been made to her by his son; “and,” added he, “the old man is so incensed against him, for having a thought of that kind in your favour, that he has sent him beyond sea, — I know not to what part; — but it seems he is never to come back, till he has given full assurances the liking he has for you is utterly worn off.”

“He might have spared himself the pains,” said Miss Betsy, blushing with disdain, “his son could have informed him, how little I was inclinable to listen to any thing he said on the score of love; and I myself, if he had asked me the question, would have given him the strongest assurances that words could form, that if ever I changed my condition, which heaven knows I am far from thinking on as yet, I should never be prevailed upon to do it, by any merits his son was possessed of.”

Mr. Goodman congratulated her on the indifference she expressed, and told her, he hoped she would always continue in the same humour, till an offer which promised more satisfaction in marriage should happen to be made.

Nothing more was said on this head; but Miss Betsy, on ruminating on what Mr. Goodman had related, easily imagined, that the day in which he had been sent away, was the same on which he had appointed to meet her, and therefore excused his not coming as a thing unavoidable; yet as she knew not the precaution his father had taken, was not so ready to forgive him for not sending a line to prevent her waiting so long for him at the habit-shop. She could not, however, when she reflected on the whole tenour of his deportment to her, think it possible he should all at once become guilty of wilfully omitting, what even common
good

good manners and decency required. She soon grew weary, however, of troubling herself about the matter, and a very few days served to make her lose even the memory of it.

CHAP. VI.

May be of some service to the ladies, especially the younger sort, if well attended to.

MISS Betsy had now no person that professed a serious passion for her ; but as she had yet never seen the man capable of inspiring her with the least emotions of tenderness, she was quite easy as to that point, and wished nothing beyond what she enjoyed, the pleasure of being told she was very handsome, and gallanted about by a great number of those, who go by the name of very pretty fellows. Pleased with the praise, she regarded not the condition or merits of the praiser, and suffered herself to be treated, presented, and squir'd about to all public places, either by the rake, the man of honour, the wit, or the fool, the married, as well as the unmarried, without distinction, and just as either fell in her way.

Such a conduct as this could not fail of laying her open to the censure of malicious tongues :—the agreeableness of her person, her wit, and the many accomplishments she was mistress of, made her envied and hated, even by those who professed the greatest friendship for her. Several there were who, though they could scarce support the vexation it gave them to see her so much preferred to themselves, yet chose to be as much with her as possible, in the cruel hope of finding some fresh matter wherewith to blast her reputation.

Certain

Certain it is, that tho' she was as far removed, as innocence itself, from all intent or wish of committing a real ill, yet she paid too little regard to the appearances of it, and said and did many things, which the actually criminal would be more cautious to avoid. Hurried by an excess of vanity, and that love of pleasure so natural to youth, she indulged herself in liberties, of which she foresaw not the consequences.

Lady Trusty, who sincerely loved her, both for her own sake, and that of her deceased mother, came more often to Mr. Goodman's than otherwise she would have done, on purpose to observe the behaviour of Miss Betsey : she had heard some accounts, which gave her great dissatisfaction ; but as she was a woman of penetration, she easily perceived, that plain reproof was not the way to prevail on her to reclaim the errors of her conduct ; — that she must be insensibly weaned from what, at present, she took so much delight in, and brought into a different manner of living, by ways which should rather seem to flatter than check her vanity : she therefore earnestly wished to get her down with her into L——e, where she was soon going herself ; but knew not how to ask her without making the same invitation to Miss Flora, whose company she no way desired, and whose example she was sensible had very much contributed to give Miss Betsey that air of levity, which rendered her good sense almost useless to her.

This worthy lady happening to find her alone one day, (a thing not very usual) she asked, by way of sounding her inclination, if she would not be glad to see L——e again ; to which she replied, that there were many people for whom she had a very great respect, but the journey was too long to be taken merely on the score of making a short visit ; for she owned she did not like the country

try well enough to continue in it for any length of time.

Lady Trusty would fain have persuaded her into a better opinion of the place she was born in, and which most of her family had passed the greatest part of their lives in ; but Miss Betsy was not to be argued into any tolerable ideas of it, and plainly told her ladyship, that what she called a happy tranquil manner of spending ones days, seemed to her little better than being buried alive.

From declaring her aversion to a country life, she ran into such extravagant encomiums on those various amusements, which London every day presented, that lady Trusty perceived it would not be without great difficulty she would be brought to a more just way of thinking : she concealed, however, as much as possible, the concern it gave her to hear her express herself in this manner, contenting herself with saying, calmly, that London was, indeed, a very agreeable place to live in, especially for young people, and the pleasures it afforded were very elegant ; “ but then” said she, “ the too frequent repetition of them, may so much engross the mind, as to take it off from other objects, which ought to have their share in it: besides,” continued she, “ there are but too frequent proofs, that an innate principle of virtue is not always a sufficient guard against the many snares laid for it, under the shew of innocent pleasures, by wicked and designing persons of both sexes ; nor can it be esteemed prudence to run ones self into dangers meerly to shew our strength in overcoming them ; nor, perhaps, would even the victory turn always to our glory : the world is censorious, and seldom ready to put the best construction on things ; so that reputation may suffer, though virtue triumphs.”

Miss Betsey listened to all this with a good deal of attention.—The impudent attempt Gayland had made on her, came fresh into her mind, and made this lady's remonstrances sink the deeper into it. The power of reflection being a little awakened in her, some freedoms also, not altogether consistent with strict modesty, which others had offered to her, convinced her of the error of maintaining too little reserve; she thanked her kind adviser, and promised to observe the precepts she had given.

Lady Trusty finding this good effect of what she had said, ventured to proceed so far, as to give some hints, that the conduct of Miss Flora had been far from blameless; and, therefore, pursued she, I should be glad, methinks, to see you separated from that young lady, though it were but for a small time; and then gave her to understand, how great a pleasure it would be to her, to get her down with her to L——e, if it could be any way contrived, that she could go without Miss Flora.

“As I have been so long from home,” said she, “I know I shall have all the gentry round the country to welcome me at my return, and if you should find the company less polite, than those you leave behind, it will, at least, diversify the scene, and render the entertainments of London new to you a second time, when you come back.”

Miss Betsey found in herself a strong inclination to comply with this proposal, and told lady Trusty, she should think herself happy in passing the whole summer with her; and as to Miss Flora, the same offer might be made to her, without any danger of her accepting it. “I am not of your opinion,” said the other; “the girl has no fortune but what Mr. Goodman shall be pleased to give her; which cannot be very considerable, as he has a nephew in the East-Indies, whom he is ex-
“tremely

“ tremely fond of, and will make his Heir. Lady Mellasin would, therefore, catch at the opportunity of sending her daughter to a place where there are so many gentlemen of estates, among whom she might have a better chance for getting a husband, than she can have in London, where her character would scarce entitle her to such a hope. I will however,” pursued she, “ run the risque, and choose rather to have a guest, whose company I do not so well approve of, than be deprived of one I so much value.”

Miss Betsy testified the sense she had of her ladyship’s goodness, in the most grateful and obliging terms, and lady Mellasin, and Miss Flora coming home soon after, lady Trusty said, she was come on purpose to ask permission for Miss Flora and Miss Betsy to pass two or three months with her, down in L——e.

Lady Mellasin, as the other had imagined, seemed extremely pleased with the invitation, and told her, she did her daughter a great deal of honour, and she would take care things should be prepared for both the young ladies to attend her, on her setting out. Lady Trusty then told her, she had fixed the day for it, which was about a fortnight after this conversation, and some other matters relating to the journey being regulated, took her leave, highly pleased with the thoughts of getting Miss Betsy to a place, where she should have an opportunity of using her utmost endeavours to improve the good she found in her disposition, and of weaning her, by degrees, from any ill habits she might have contracted in that Babel of mixed company she was accustomed to at lady Mellasin’s.

C H A P. VII.

Is a medly of various particulars, which pave the way for matters of more consequence.

MISS Flora had now nothing in her head, but the many hearts she expected to captivate, when she should arrive in L——e; and lady Mellasin, who soothed her in all her vanities, resolved to spare nothing which she imagined would contribute to that purpose. Miss Betsey, who had the same ambition, though for different ends, made it also pretty much her study to set off, to the best advantage, the charms she had received from nature. The important article of dress now engrossed the whole conversation of these ladies. The day after that in which lady Trusty had made the invitation to the two young ones, lady Mellasin went with them to the mercer's to buy some silks: she pitched on a very genteel new-fashioned pattern for her daughter; but chose one for Miss Betsey, which, though rich, seemed to her not well fancied; she testified her disapprobation, but lady Mellasin said so much in the praise of it, and the mercer, either to please her, or because he was desirous of getting it sold, assured Miss Betsey that it was admired by every body, that it was the newest thing he had in his shop, and had already sold several pieces to ladies of the first quality: all this did not argue Miss Betsey into a liking of it; yet between them she was overpersuaded to have it. When these purchases were made, they went home, only stopped at the mantua-maker's in their way, to order her to come that afternoon; lady Mellasin did no more than set them down, and then went on in the coach to make a visit.

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The young ladies fell to reviewing their silks ; but Miss Betsy was no way satisfied with her's : the more she looked upon it, the worse it appeared to her. " I shall never wear this with any pleasure," said she ; " I wish the man had it in his shop again, for I think it quite ugly." Miss Flora told her, that she wondered at her, that the thing was perfectly handsome, and that my lady's judgment was never before called in question. " That may be," replied Miss Betsy, " but certainly every one ought " to please their own fancy in the choice of their " cloaths ; for my part I shall never endure to see " myself in it." Not when their fancy happens to " differ from that of those who know better than " themselves what is fit for them." cried Miss Flora ; " and, besides, have the power over them." She spoke this with so much pertness, that Miss Betsy, who had a violent spirit, was highly provoked. " Power over them !" cried she, " I do " not know what you mean, Miss Flora ; Mr. " Goodman is one of my guardians indeed, but " I don't know why that should entitle his lady to " direct me in what I shall wear."

Mr. Goodman, who happened to be looking over some papers in a little closet he had within his parlour, hearing part of this dispute, and finding it was like to grow pretty warm, came out, in hopes of moderating it. On hearing Miss Betsy's complaint, he desired to see the silk ; which being shewn him. " I do not pretend," said he, " to much " understanding in these things ; but, methinks, it " is very handsome." It would do well enough " for winter, Sir," replied Miss Betsy ; " but it " is too hot and heavy for summer ; besides, it is " so thick and clumsy, it would make me look as " big again as I am : I'll not wear it, I am resolved, in the country, whatever I do when I come " to town in the dark weather."

" Well,"

“ Well,” said Mr. Goodman, “ I will speak to my lady to get it changed for something else.” “ Indeed, Sir,” cried Miss Flora, “ I am sure my mamma will do no such thing, and take it very ill to hear it proposed.” “ You need not put yourself in any heat,” replied Miss Betsy, “ I don’t desire she should be troubled any farther about it ; but, Sir,” continued she, turning to Mr. Goodman, “ I think I am now at an age capable of choosing for my self, in the article of dress ; and as it has been settled between you and Sir Ralph Trusty, that out of the income of my fortune, thirty pounds a year should be allowed for my board, twenty pounds for my pocket expences, and fifty for my cloaths, I think I ought to have the two latter entirely at my own disposal, and to lay it out as I think fit, and not be obliged, like a charity-child, to wear whatever livery my benefactor shall be pleased to order.” She spoke this with so much spleen, that Mr. Goodman was a little nettled at it, and told her, that what his wife had done was out of kindness and good will, which since she did not take as was meant, she should have her money to do with as she would.

“ That is all I desire,” answered she, “ therefore be pleased to let me have twenty guineas now, or, if there does not remain so much in your hands, I will ask Sir Ralph to advance it, and you may return it to him when you settle accounts.” “ No, no,” cried the merchant hastily, “ I see no reason to trouble my good friend, Sir Ralph, on such a frivolous matter. You shall have the sum you mention, Miss Betsy, whether so much remains out of the hundred pounds a year set apart for you subsistence, or not, as I can but deduct it out of the next payment ; but I would have you manage with discretion,

“cretion, for you may depend, that the surplus of
“what was at first agreed upon, shall not be broke
“into, but laid up to increase your fortune, which,
“by the time you come of age, I hope, will be
“pretty handsomely improved.”

Miss Betsy then assured him, that she doubted not of his zeal for her interest, and hoped she had not offended him in any thing she had said, “No, no,” replied he. “I always make allowances for the little impatiencies of persons of your sex and age, especially when dress is concerned.” In speaking these words, he opened his bureau, and took out twenty guineas, which he immediately gave her, making her first sign a memorandum of it. Miss Flora was all on fire to have offered something in opposition to this, but durst not do it, and the mantua-maker that instant coming in, she went up stairs with her into her chamber, leaving Miss Betsy and Mr. Goodman together; the former of whom, being eager to go about what she intended, ordered a hackney coach to be called, and taking the silk with her, went directly to the shop where it was bought.

The mercer at first seemed unwilling to take it again; but on her telling him, she would always make use of him, for every thing she wanted in his way, and would then buy two suits of him, he at last consented. As she was extremely curious in every thing relating to her shape, she made choice of a pink coloured French lutestring, to the end, that the plaits lying flat, would shew the beauty of her waist to more advantage; and to atone for the slightness of the silk, purchased as much of it as would flounce the sleeves, and the petticoat from top to bottom: she made the mercer also cut off a sufficient quantity of a rich green Venetian sattin, to make her a riding habit; and as she came home bought a silver trimming for it of Point D’Espagne; all

all which, with the silk she disliked in exchange, did not amount to the money she had received from Mr. Goodman.

On her return, she asked the footman, who opened the door, if the mantua-maker was gone; but he not being able to inform her, she ran hastily up stairs to Miss Flora's chamber, which, indeed, was also her own; for they lay together: she was about to bounce in, but found the door was locked, and the key taken out on the inside. This very much surprised her, especially as she thought she had heard Miss Flora's Voice, as she was at the top of the stair-case: wanting, therefore, to be satisfied who was with her, she went as softly as she could into lady Mellasin's dressing-room, which was parted from the chamber but by a slight wainscoat: she put her ear close to the pannel, in order to discover the voices of them that spoke, and finding, by some light that came through a crack or flaw in the boards, her eyes, as well as ears, contributed to a discovery she little expected. In fine, she plainly perceived Miss Flora, and a man rise off the bed; she could not at first discern who he was, but, on his turning to go out of the room, knew him to be no other than Gayland. They went out of the chamber together, as gently as they could; and tho' Miss Betsy might, by taking three steps, have met them in the passage, and have had an opportunity of revenging herself on Miss Flora for the late airs she had given herself, by shewing, how near she was to the scene of infamy she had been acting; yet the shock she felt herself, on being witness of it, kept her immoveable for some time, and she suffered them to depart without the mortification of thinking any one knew of their being together, in the manner they were.

This young lady, who though, as I have already taken notice, was of too volatile and gay a disposition,

sition, hated any thing that had the least tincture of indecency, was so much disconcerted at the discovery she had made, that she had not power to stir from the place she was in, much less to resolve how to behave in this affair; that is, whether it would be best, or not, to let Miss Flora know she was in the secret of her shame, or to suffer her to think herself secure.

She was, however, beginning to meditate on this point, when she heard Miss Flora come up stairs, calling at every step, "Miss Betsy!—Miss Betsy!—where are you?"—Gayland was gone, and his young mistress being told Miss Betsy was come home, guessed it was she who had given an interruption to their pleasures, by coming to the door; she, therefore, as she could not imagine her so perfectly convinced, contrived to disguise the whole, and worst of the truth, by revealing a part of it; and as soon as she had found her, "Lord, Miss Betsy!" cried she, with an unparell'd assurance, "where have you been?—how do you think I have been served by that cursed toad Gayland? he came up into our chamber, where the mantua-maker and I were, and as soon as she was gone, locked the door, and began to kiss and touze me so, that I protest I was frightened almost out of my wits. The devil meant no harm though, I believe, for I got rid of him easy enough; but I wish you had rapped heartily at the door, and obliged him to open it, that we both might have rated him for his impudence." "Some people have a great deal of impudence, indeed," replied Miss Betsy, astonished at her manner of bearing it off. "Aye, so they have, my dear, rejoined the other, with a careless air; but, prithee, where have you been rambling by yourself?" "No farther than Bedford-

“ Bedford-street,” answered Miss Betsey : “ you
“ may see on what errand,” continued she, pointing to the silks, which she had laid down on a chair. Miss Flora presently ran to the bundle, examined what it contained, and either being in a better humour, or affecting to be so, than when they talked on this head in the parlour, testified no disapprobation of what she had done ; but, on the contrary, talked to her in such soft obliging terms, that Miss Betsey, who had a great deal of good-nature, when not provoked by any thing that seemed an affront to herself, could not find in her heart to say any thing to give her confusion.

When lady Mellasin came home, and was informed how Miss Betsey had behaved, in relation to the silk, she at first put on an air full of resentment ; but finding the other wanted neither wit nor spirit to defend her own cause, and not caring to break with her, especially as her daughter was going with her to L——e, soon grew more moderate, and, at length, affected to think no more of it. Certain it is, however, that this affair, silly as it was, and, as one would think, insignificant in itself, lay broiling in the minds of both mother and daughter, and they waited only for an opportunity of venting their spite, in such a manner, as should not make them appear to have the least tincture of so foul and mean a passion ; but as neither of them were capable of a sincere friendship, and had no real regard for any one beside themselves, their displeasure was of little consequence.

Preparations for the journey of the young ladies, seemed, for the present, to employ all their thoughts, and diligence enough was used to get every thing ready against the time prefixed, which wanted but three days of being expired, when an unforeseen accident put an entire stop to it.

Miss Betsy received a letter from her brother, Mr. Francis Thoughtless, accompanied with another to Mr. Goodman, acquainting them, that he had obtained leave from the head of the college, to pass a month in London ; that he should set out from Oxford in two days, and hoped to enjoy the satisfaction of being with them in twelve hours after his letter. What could she now do ? it would have been a sin, not only against natural affection, but against the rules of common good manners, to have left the town, either on the news of his arrival, or immediately after it ; nor could lady Trufty expect, or desire she should entertain a thought of doing so : she was too wise, and too good, not to consider the interest of families very much depended on the strict union among the branches of it ; and that the natural affection between brothers and sisters, could not be too much cultivated. Far, therefore, from insisting on the promise Miss Betsy had made of going with her into the country, she congratulated her on the happy disappointment, and told her, that she should receive her with a double satisfaction, if after Mr. Francis returned to Oxford, she would come and pass what then remained of the summer season with her. This, Miss Betsy assured her ladyship, she would do ; so that, according to all appearance, the benefits she might have received, by being under the eye of so excellent an instructress, were but delayed, not lost.

C H A P. VIII.

Relates how, by a concurrence of odd circumstances, Miss Betsy was brought pretty near the crisis of her fate, and the means by which she escaped.

MR. Francis Thoughtless arrived in town the very evening before the day in which Sir

Ralph Trusty and his lady were to set out for L——e. They had not seen this young gentleman since the melancholy occasion of his father's funeral, and would have been glad to have had some time with him; but could no way put off their journey, as word was sent of the day in which they expected to be at home: Sir Ralph knew very well, that a great number of his tenants, and friends, would meet him on the road, and a letter would not reach them soon enough to prevent them from being disappointed: they supped with him, however, at Mr. Goodman's, who would not permit him to have any other home than his house, during his stay in town. Lady Trusty, on taking leave of Miss Betsey, said to her, she hoped she would remember her promise when her brother was returned to Oxford; on which she replied, that she could not be so much an enemy to her own happiness as to fail.

Miss Betsey and this brother had been always extremely fond of each other, and the length of time they had been asunder, and the improvement which that time had made in both, heightened their mutual satisfaction in meeting.

All that troubled Miss Betsey now, was, that her brother happened to come to London at a season of the year, in which he could not receive the least satisfaction: the king was gone to Hanover, all the foreign ministers, and great part of the nobility, attended him, and the rest were retired to their country seats; so that an entire stop was put to all public diversions worth seeing. There were no plays, no operas, no masquerades, no balls, no public shews, except at the little theatre in the Hay-market, then known by the name of F——g's scandal-shop; because he frequently exhibited there certain drolls, or, more properly, invectives against the ministry: in doing which it appears extremely probable,

probable, that he had two views; the one to get money, which he very much wanted, from such as delighted in low humour, and could not distinguish true satire from scurrility; and the other, in the hope of having some post given him by those whom he had abused, in order to silence his dramatic talent. But it is not my business to point out either the merit of that gentleman's performances, or the motives he had for writing them, as the town is perfectly acquainted both with his abilities and success; and has since seen him, with astonishment, wriggle himself into favour, by pretending to cajole those he had not the power to intimidate.

But though there were none of the diversions I have mentioned, nor Ranelagh at that time thought of, nor Vauxhall, Mary-le-bone, nor Cuper's-gardens, in the repute they since have been, the young gentleman found sufficient to entertain him: empty as the town was, lady Mellasin was not without company, who made frequent parties of pleasure, and when nothing else was to be found for recreation, cards filled up the void.

Nothing material enough to be inserted in this history happened to Miss Betsy, during the time her brother stayed, till one evening, as the family were sitting together, some discourse concerning Oxford coming on the tapis, Mr. Francis spoke so largely in the praise of the wholesomeness of the air, the many fine walks and gardens with which the place abounded, and the good company that were continually resorting to it, that Miss Betsy cried out, she longed to see it, — Miss Flora said the same.

On this, the young gentleman gave them an invitation to go down with him, when he went, saying, they never could go at a better time, as both the assizes and races were to be in about a month. Miss Betsy said, such a jaunt would vastly delight
D 2 her.

her. Miss Flora echoed her approbation, and added, she wished my lady would consent, “ I have no objection to make to it,” replied lady Mellasin, “ as you will have a conductor, who, I know, will be very careful of you.” Mr. Goodman’s consent was also asked, for the sake of form, though every one knew the opinion of his wife, was of itself, a sufficient sanction.

Though it is highly probable, that Miss Betsy was much better pleased with this journey, than she would have been with that to L——e, yet she thought herself obliged, both in gratitude and good manners, to write to lady Trusty, and make the best excuse she could for her breach of promise, which she did in these terms.

To Lady TRUSTY.

Most dear and honoured madam,

“ MY brother Frank being extremely desirous
 “ of shewing Miss Flora and myself the cu-
 “ riosities of Oxford, has obtained leave from
 “ Mr. Goodman, and lady Mellasin, for us to ac-
 “ company him to that place: I am afraid the
 “ season will be too far advanced, for us to take a
 “ journey to L——e at our return; therefore
 “ flatter myself your ladyship will pardon the in-
 “ dispensable necessity I am under of deferring,
 “ till next spring, the happiness I proposed in wait-
 “ ing on you. All here present my worthy guar-
 “ dian, and your ladyship, with their best respects.
 “ I beg mine may be equally acceptable, and that
 “ you will always continue to favour with your
 “ good wishes, her, who is,

“ With the most perfect esteem,

“ Madam,

“ Your ladyship’s most obliged,

“ And most obedient servant,

“ E. THOUGHTLESS.”

The

The time for the young gentleman's departure being arrived, they went together in the stage, attended by a footman of Mr. Goodman's, whom lady Mellasin would needs send with them, in order to give the young ladies an air of dignity.

They found, on their arrival at that justly celebrated seat of learning, that Mr. Francis had given no greater eulogiums on it, than it merited : they were charmed with the fine library, the musæum, the magnificence of the halls, belonging to the several colleges, the physic-garden, and other curious walks ; but that which above all the rest gave the most satisfaction to Miss Betsy, as well as to her companion, was that respectful gallantry with which they found themselves treated, by the gentlemen of the university. Mr. Francis was extremely beloved amongst them, on account of his affability, politeness, and good-humour, and they seemed glad of an opportunity of shewing the regard they had for the brother, by paying all manner of assiduities to the sister ; he gave the ladies an elegant entertainment at his own rooms, to which also some of those with whom he was the most intimate were invited. All these thought themselves bound to return the same compliment : the company of every one present were desired to their respective apartments ; and as each of these gentlemen had, besides, other particular friends of their own, whom they wished to oblige, the number of the guests were still increased at every feast.

By this means, Miss Betsy and Miss Flora soon acquired a very large acquaintance, and as through the care of Mr. Francis they were lodged in one of the best and most reputable houses in town, their families known, and themselves were young ladies who knew how to behave as well as dress, and receive company in the most elegant and polite manner, every one was proud of a pretence for visiting them.

The respect paid to them would doubtless have every day increased, during the whole time they should have thought proper to continue in Oxford, and on quitting it have left behind them the highest idea of their merit, if, by one inconsiderate action, they had not at once forfeited the esteem they had gained, and rendered themselves the subjects of ridicule, even to those who before had regarded them with veneration.

They were walking out one day, about an hour or two before the time in which they usually dined, into the parks, where they were met by a gentleman-commoner, and a young student, both of whom they had been in company with at most of the entertainments before-mentioned. The sparks begged leave to attend them, which being readily granted, they walked all together for some time; but the weather being very warm, the gentleman-commoner took an occasion to remind the ladies how much their beauty would be in danger of suffering from the immoderate rays of phœbus, and proposed going to some gardens, full of the most beautiful alcoves and arbours, so shaded over, that the sun, even in his meridian force, could, at the most, but glimmer through the delightful gloom: he painted the pleasures of the place, to which he was desirous of leading them, with so romantic an energy, that they immediately, and without the least scruple or hesitation, consented to be conducted thither.

This was a condescension, which he, who asked it, scarce expected would be granted, and, on finding it so easily obtained, began to form some conjectures no way to the advantage of these ladies reputation. It is certain, indeed, that as he professed a friendship for the brother, he ought not, in strict honour, to have proposed any thing to the sister, which would be unbecoming her to agree

to;

to; but he was young, gay to an excess, and in what he said, or did, not always took consideration for his guide.

They went on laughing till they came to the place he mentioned, where the gentlemen having shewed their fair companions into the gardens, in which were, indeed, several recesses, no less dark than had been described: on entering one of them, Miss Betsy cried, " Bless me! this is fit for nothing " but for people to do what they are ashamed of " in the light." The fitter then, madam," replied the gentleman-commoner, " to encourage a lover, " who, perhaps, has suffered more through his " own timidity, than the cruelty of the object he " adores." He accompanied these words with a seizure of both her hands, and two or three kisses on her lips. The young student was no less free with Miss Flora; but neither of these ladies gave themselves the trouble to reflect what consequences might possibly attend a prelude of this nature, and repulsed the liberties they took in such a manner, as made the offenders imagine they had not sinned beyond a pardon.

They would not, however, be prevailed on to stay, or even to sit down in that darksome recess, but went back into a house, where they were shewn into a very pleasant room, which commanded the whole prospect of the garden, and was sufficiently shaded from the sun by jessamin and honeysuckles, which grew against the windows: here wine, cakes, jellies, and such like things being brought, the conversation was extremely lively, and full of gallantry, without the least mixture of indecency.

The gentlemen exerted all their wit and eloquence, to persuade the ladies not to go home in the heat of the day; but take up with such entertainment as the place they were in was able to present them with. Neither of them made any objection,

except that having said they should dine at home, the family would wait in expectation of their coming ; but this difficulty was easily got over : the footman, who had attended Miss Betsy and Miss Flora, in their morning's walk, was in the house, and might be sent to acquaint the people, that they were not to expect them. As they were neither displeased with the company, nor place they were in, they needed not abundance of persuasions, and the servant was immediately dispatched. The gentlemen went out of the room, to give orders for having something prepared, but staid not two minutes ; and, on their return, omitted nothing that might keep up the good humour and sprightliness of their fair companions.

Persons of so gay and volatile a disposition, as these four, could not content themselves with sitting still, and barely talking,——every limb must be in motion,——every faculty employed. The gentleman commoner took Miss Betsy's hand, and led her some steps of a minuet, then fell into a rigadon, then into the loup, and so ran through all the school-dances, without regularly beginning or ending any one of them, or of the tunes he sung : the young student was not less alert with Miss Flora ; so that between singing, dancing and laughing, they all grew extremely warm. Miss Betsy ran to a window to take breath, and get a little air ; her partner followed, and taking up her fan, which lay on a table, employed it with a great deal of dexterity, to assist the wind, that came in at the casement for her refreshment. “ Heaven !” cried he, “ how divinely lovely do you now appear ? the goddess of the spring, nor Venus's self, was ever painted half so beautiful. What eyes !—what a mouth !—and what a shape !” continued he, surveying her, as it were, from head to foot, “ how exquisitely turn-
“ ed !

“ed! — how taper! — how slender! — I
 “don’t believe you measure half a yard round
 “the waist.” In speaking these words, he put his
 handkerchief about her waist, after which he tied
 it round his head, repeating these lines of Mr.
 Waller’s:

“That which her slender waist confin’d

“Shall now my joyful temples bind;

“No monarch but would give his crown,

“His arms might do what this has done.”

“O fie upon it,” said Miss Betsy, laughing,
 and snatching it from his head, “this poetry is
 “stale, I should rather have expected from an Oxo-
 “nian, some fine thing of his own extempore,
 “on this occasion; which, perhaps, I might have
 “been vain enough to have got printed in the
 “monthly magazines.”

“Ah! madam,” replied he, looking on her
 with dying languishments, “where the heart is
 “deeply affected, the brain seldom produces any
 “thing but incongruous ideas. Had Sacarissa been
 “mistress of the charms you are, or had Waller
 “loved like me, he had been less capable of writ-
 “ing in the manner he did.”

The student perceiving his friend was entering
 into a particular conversation with Miss Betsy,
 found means to draw Miss Flora out of the room,
 and left them together, though this young lady af-
 terwards protested, she called to Miss Betsy to fol-
 low; but if she did, it was in such a low voice,
 that the other did not hear her, and continued her
 pleasantry, rallying the gentleman-commoner, or
 every thing he said, till he finding the opportunity
 he had of being revenged, soon turned his humble
 adoration into an air more free and natural to him.
 As she was opening her mouth to utter some sarcasm
 or other, he caught her in his arms, and began
 to kiss her with so much warmth and eagerness

that surprized her ; she struggled to get loose, and called Miss Flora, not knowing she was gone, to come to her assistance. The efforts she made at first to oblige him to desist, were not, however, quite so strenuous as they ought to have been, on such an occasion ; but finding he was about to proceed to greater liberties than any man before had ever taken with her, she collected all her strength, and broke from him, when looking round the room, and seeing no body there, “ Bless me,” cried she, “ what is the meaning of all this ? —where are our friends ?” “ They are gone,” said he, “ to pay the debt, which love, and youth, and beauty challenge ; let us not be remiss, nor waste the precious moments in idle scruples. Come, my angel !” pursued he, endeavouring to get her once more into his arms, “ make me the happiest of mankind, and be as divinely good as you are fair.”

“ I do not understand you, Sir,” replied she, “ but neither desire, nor will stay to hear an explanation.” She spoke this with somewhat of an haughty air, and was making towards the door ; but he was far from being intimidated, and, instead of suffering her to pass, he seized her a little roughly with one hand, and with the other made fast the door ; “ Come, come, my dear creature,” cried he, “ no more resistance, you see you are in my power, and the very name of being so, is sufficient to absolve you to yourself, for any act of kindness you may bestow upon me ; be generous then, and be assured it shall be an inviolable secret.”

She was about to say something, but he stopped her mouth with kisses, and forced her to sit down in a chair, where holding her fast, her ruin had certainly been compleated, if a loud knocking at the

the door had not prevented him from prosecuting his design.

This was the brother of Miss Betsy, who having been at her lodgings, on his coming from thence met the footman, who had been sent to acquaint the family the ladies would not dine at home : he asked where his sister was, and the fellow having told him, came directly to the place. A waiter of the house shewed him to the room ; on finding it locked, he was strangely amazed, and both knocked and called to have it opened, with a good deal of vehemence.

The gentleman-commoner knowing his voice, was shocked to the last degree ; but quitted that instant his intended prey, and let him enter. Mr. Francis, on coming in, knew not what to think ; he saw the gentleman in great disorder, and his sister in much more. “ What is the meaning of “ this,” said he : “ Sister, how came you here ? ” “ Ask me no questions at present,” replied she, scarce able to speak, so strangely had her late fright seized on her spirits, “ but see me safe from this “ cursed house, and that worst of men.” Her speaking in this manner, made Mr. Francis apprehend the whole, and perhaps more than the truth. “ How, Sir ! ” said he, darting a furious look on the gentleman-commoner, “ what is it I hear ? — “ have you dared to — ? ” “ Whatever I “ have dared to,” interrupted the other, I am capable of defending.” “ ’Tis well,” rejoined the “ brother of Miss Betsy, perhaps, I may put you “ to the trial ; but this is not a time or place.” He then took hold of his sister’s hand, and led her down stairs ; as they were going out, Miss Betsy stopping a little to adjust her dress, which was strangely disordered, she bethought herself of Miss Flora, who, though she was very angry with, she did not choose to leave behind at the mercy of such rakes,

rakes, as she had reason to think those were, whom she had been in company with. Just as she was desiring her brother to send a waiter in search of that young lady, they saw her coming out of the garden, led by the young student, who, as soon as he beheld Mr. Francis, cried, “ha! Frank, how came you here? you look out of humour.” “How I came here, it matters not,” replied he, fullenly; “and as to my being out of humour, perhaps you may know better than I yet do, what cause I have for being so.”

He waited for no answer to these words, but conducted his sister out of the house as hastily as he could: Miss Flora followed, after having taken leave of her companion in what manner she thought proper.

On their coming home, Miss Betsey related to her brother, as far as her modesty would permit, all the particulars of this adventure, and ended with saying, that sure it was heaven alone that gave her strength to prevent the perpetration of the villain’s intentions. Mr. Francis, all the time she was speaking, bit his lips, and shewed great tokens of an extraordinary disturbance in his mind; but offered not the least interruption. When he perceived she had done, “well, sister,” said he, “I shall hear what he has to say, and will endeavour to oblige him to ask your pardon;” and soon after took his leave.

Miss Betsey did not very well comprehend his meaning in these words, and was, indeed, still in too much confusion to consider on any thing: but what the consequences were of this transaction the reader will presently be informed of.

C H A P. IX.

*Contains such things as might be reasonably expected,
after the preceding adventures.*

WHEN, in any thing irregular, and liable to censure, more persons than one are concerned, how natural is it for each to accuse the other? and it of ten happens, in this case, that the greatest part of the blame falls on the least culpable.

After Mr. Francis had left the ladies, in order to be more fully convinced in this matter, and take such measures as he thought would best become him for the reparation of the affront offered to the honour of his family, Miss Flora began to reproach Miss Betsy, for having related any thing of what had passed to her brother: "By your own account," said she, "no harm was done to you; but some people love to make a bustle about nothing." "And some people," replied Miss Betsy, tartly, "love nothing but the gratifications of their own passions, and having no sense of virtue or modesty themselves, can have no regard to that of another." "What do you mean, Miss?" cried the other, with a pert air. "My meaning is pretty plain," rejoined Miss Betsy; "but since you affect so much ignorance, I must tell you, that the expectations of a second edition of the same work Mr. Gayland had helped you to compose, though from another quarter, tempted you to sneak out of the room, and leave your friend in danger of falling a sacrifice to what her soul most detests and scorns." These words stung Miss Flora to the quick; her face was in an instant covered with a scarlet blush, and every feature betrayed the confusion of her mind;

mind ; but recovering herself from it, much sooner than most others of her age could have done : “ Good lack,” cried she, “ I fancy you are setting up for a prude ; but pray, how came Mr. Gayland into your head ? — What, because I told you he innocently romped with me one day in the chamber, are you so censorious as to infer any thing criminal passed between us ? ” “ Whatever I infer,” replied Miss Betsy, disdainfully, “ I have better vouchers for the truth of, than your report, and would advise you, when you go home, to get the chink in the pannel of the wainscot of my lady’s dressing room stopped up, or your next rendezvous with that gentleman, may possibly have witnesses of more ill-nature than myself.” “ That can scarcely be,” said Miss Flora, ready to burst with vexation ; “ but don’t think I value your little malice ; you are only angry because he slighted the advances you made him, and took all opportunities to shew how much his heart and judgment gave the preference to me.” These words so piqued the vanity of Miss Betsy, that not able to bear she should continue in the imagination of being better liked than herself, though even by the man she hated, told her the solicitations he had made to her, the letter she had received from him, and the rebuff she had given him upon it ; “ so that,” pursued she, “ it was not till after he found there was no hopes of gaining me, that he carried his devoirs to you.”

Miss Flora was more nettled at this eclarcissement, than she was at the discovery she now perceived the other had made of her intrigue : she pretended, however, not to believe a word of what she had said ; but willing to evade all farther discourse on that head, returned to the adventure they had just gone through with the Oxonians. “ Ne-
“ ver

“ ver expect,” said she, “ to pass it upon any one
“ of common sense, that if you had not a mind to
“ have been alone with that terrible man, as you
“ now describe him, you would have staid in the
“ room after I was gone, and called to you to fol-
“ low.”

It was in vain that Miss Betsy denied she either heard her speak, or knew any thing of her departure, till some time after she was gone, and the gentleman-commoner began to use her with such familiarities as convinced her he was sensible no witnesses were present. This, though no more than truth, was of no consequence to her justification; to one determined to believe the worst, or, at least, seem to do so: Miss Flora treated with contempt all she said on this score, derided her imprecations, and to mortify her the more, said to her, in a taunting manner: “ Come, come, Miss Betsy,
“ ’tis a folly to think to impose upon the world by
“ such shallow artifices: — what your inclinati-
“ ons are is evident enough; any one may see, that
“ if it had not been for your brother’s unseasonable
“ interruption, no-body would ever have heard a
“ word of those insults you now so heavily com-
“ plain of.”

Poor Miss Betsy could not refrain letting fall some tears at so unjust and cruel an innuendo; but the greatness of her spirit enabled her in a few moments to overcome the shock it had given her: she returned reproaches with reproaches, and as she had infinitely more of truth and reason on her side, had also much the better in this combat of tongues, nevertheless the other would not give out; she upbraided, and exaggerated, with the most malicious comments on it, every little indiscretion Miss Betsy had been guilty of, repeated every censure which she had heard the ill-natured part of the
world

world pass upon her conduct, and added many more, the invention of her own fertile brain.

Some ladies they had made acquaintance with in town coming to visit them, put an end to the debate; but neither being able presently to forget the bitter reflections cast on her by the other, both remained extremely sullen the whole night, and their mutual ill humour might possibly have lasted much longer, but for an accident more material, which took off their attention, as it might have produced much worse consequences than any quarrel between themselves could be attended with. It happened in this manner :

The brother of Miss Betsey was of a fiery disposition, and though those who were entrusted with the care of his education, were not wanting in their pains to correct this propensity, which they thought would be the more unbecoming in him, as he was intended for the pulpit, yet did not their endeavours for that purpose meet with all the success they wished. Nature may be moderated, but never can be wholly changed, the seeds of wrath still remained in his soul, nor could the rudiments that had been given him be sufficient to hinder them from springing into action, when urged by any provocation. The treatment his sister had received from the gentleman-commoner, seemed to him so justifiable a one, that he thought he ought not, without great submissions on the part of the transgressor, be prevailed upon to put it up.

The first step he took was to sound the young student, as to what he knew relating to the affair, who freely told him, as Miss Betsey herself had done, where they met the ladies, and the manner in which they went into the house ; protesting, that neither himself, nor according to the best of his belief, the gentleman-commoner, had at that time
any

any designs in view, but meer complaisance and gallantry.

“How then came you to separate yourselves?” cried Mr. Francis, with some earnestness. “That also was accidental,” replied the other: “your sister’s companion telling me, she liked the garden better than the room we were in, I thought I could do no less than attend her thither. I confess I did not consult whether those we left behind had any inclination to follow us or not.”

The air with which he spoke of this part of the adventure, had something in it, which did not give Mr. Francis the most favourable idea of Miss Flora’s conduct; but that not much concerning him, and finding nothing wherewith he could justly reproach the student, he soon after quitted him, and went to the gentleman-commoner, having been told he might find him in his rooms.

Had any one been witness of the manner in which these two accosted each other, they would not have been at a loss to guess what would ensue: the brother of Miss Betsy came with a mind full of resentment, and determined to repair the affront had been offered to him in the person of a sister, who was very dear to him, by calling the other to a severe account for what he had done. The gentleman-commoner was descended of a noble family, had an estate to support the dignity of his birth, and was too much puffed up and insolent on the smiles of fortune: he was conscious the affront he had given demanded satisfaction, and neither doubted of the errand on which Mr. Francis was come, nor wondered at it; but could not bring himself to acknowledge he had done amiss, nor think of making any excuse for his behaviour. Guilt in a proud heart is generally accompanied

accompanied with a sullen obstinacy ; for, as the poet says,

“ Forgiveness to the injur’d does belong :

“ But they ne’er pardon who have done the
“ wrong.”

He, therefore, received the interrogatories Mr. Francis was beginning to make, with an air rather indignant than complying, which the other not being able to brook, such hot words arose between them, as could not but occasion a challenge, which was given by Mr. Francis. The appointment to meet was the next morning at six o’clock, and the place, that very field in which the gentleman commoner, and his friend had so unluckily happened to meet the ladies in their morning’s walk.

Neither of them wanted courage, nor communicated their rendezvous to any one person, in hope of being disappointed without danger of their honour ; but each being equally animated with the ambition of humbling the arrogance of the other, both were secret as to the business, and no less punctual as to the time.

The agreement between them was sword and pistol, which both having provided themselves with, they no sooner came within a proper distance, than they discharged at each other, the first course of this fatal entertainment ; that of the gentleman-commoner was so well aimed, that one of the bullets lodged in the shoulder, and the other grazing on the fleshy part of the arm of his antagonist, put him into a great deal of pain ; but these wounds rather increased than diminished the fury he was possessed of ; he instantly drew his sword, and ran at the other with so well-directed a force, that his weapon entered three inches deep into the right side of the gentleman-commoner : both of them received several other hurts, yet still both continued the
fight

fight with equal vehemence, nor would either of them, in all probability, have receded, till one or other of them had lain dead upon the place, if some countrymen, who by accident were passing that way, had not with their clubs beat down the swords of both, and carried the owners of them by meer force into the village they were going to, where they were no sooner entered, than several people who knew them, seeing them pass by in this manner, covered all over with their own blood, and guarded by a pack of rustics, ran out to enquire what had happened, which being informed of, they took them out of the hands of these men, and provided proper apartments for them.

By this time they were both extremely faint through the anguish of their wounds, and the great effusion of blood that had issued from them. Surgeons were immediately sent for, who on examining their hurts, pronounced none of them to be mortal, yet such as would require some time for cure.

Mr. Francis suffered extreme torture in having the bullet extracted from his shoulder, yet notwithstanding that, and the weak condition he was in, he made a servant support him in his bed, while he scrawled out these few lines to his sister ; which, as soon as finished, were carried to her by the same person.

TO MISS BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

“ *My dear sister,*
 “ I HAVE endangered my life, and am now
 “ confined to my bed, by the wounds I have
 “ received, in endeavouring to revenge your quar-
 “ rel : do not think I tell you this by way of re-
 “ proach ; for, I assure you, would the circum-
 “ stance of the affair have permitted it to have
 been

“ been concealed, you never should have known
“ it.

“ I should be glad to see you, but think it not
“ proper that you should come to me, ’till I hear
“ what is said concerning this matter. I shall send
“ to you every day ; and that you will be perfectly
“ easy, is the earnest request of,

“ Dear Betsy,

“ Your most affectionate brother,

“ And humble servant,

“ F. THOUGHTLESS.”

The young ladies were that morning at breakfast in the parlour, with the gentlewoman of the house, when the maid came running in, and told her mistress, she had heard, in a shop where she had been, of a sad accident that had just happened: “ Two gentlemen,” cried she, “ of the university have been fighting, and almost killed one another ; and they say,” continued she, “ it was about a young lady, that one of them attempted to ravish.”

Miss Betsy and Miss Flora, at this intelligence, looked at each other with a good deal of confusion, already beginning to suspect who the persons were, and how deeply themselves, one of them especially, was interested in this misfortune. The gentlewoman asked her servant, if she knew the names of those who fought: “ No, Madam,” answered she, “ I could not learn that, as yet ; but the people in the street are all talking of it, and I do not doubt but I shall hear the whole story the next time I go out.”

The good gentlewoman, little imagining how much her guests were concerned in what she spake, could not now forbear lamenting the ungovernableness of youth ; the heedless levities of the one sex, and the mad-brained passions of the other. The
persons

persons to whom she directed this discourse would not, at another time, have given much ear to it, or perhaps have replied to it with raillery; but the occasion of it now put both of them in too serious a temper to offer any interruption, and she was still going on, inveighing against the follies and vices of the age, when Miss Betsy received the above letter from her brother, which confirmed all those alarming conjectures the maid's report had raised in her mind.

The mistress of the house perceiving the young man, who brought the letter, came upon business to the ladies, had the good manners to leave the room, that they might talk with the greater freedom. Miss Betsy asked a thousand questions, but he was able to inform her of no farther particulars, than what the letter contained.

The moment he was gone, she ran up to her chamber, threw herself upon the bed, and, in a flood of tears, gave a loose to the most poignant vexation she had ever yet experienced. Miss Flora followed, and seeing her in this condition, thought she could do no less in decency, than contribute every thing in her power for her consolation.

By the behaviour of this young lady, in other respects, however, the reader will easily perceive it was more through policy than real good-nature, she treated her afflicted companion with the tenderness she now did: she knew, that it was not by an open quarrel with Miss Betsy she could wreak any part of the spite she had conceived against her, and was therefore glad to lay hold of this opportunity of being reconciled.

“ I was afraid, my dear,” said she, “ that it
“ would come to this, and that put me into so
“ great a passion with you yesterday, for telling
“ Mr. Francis any thing of the matter: the men
“ are such creatures, that there is no trusting them
“ with

“ with any thing ; but come,” continued she, kissing her cheek, “ don’t grieve and torment yourself in this manner, you find there is no danger of death on either side, and as for the rest it will all blow off in time.” Miss Betsy said little to this, the sudden passion of her soul must have its vent ; but when that was over, she began to listen to the voice of comfort, and, by degrees, to resume her natural vivacity, not foreseeing that this unhappy adventure would lay her under mortifications, which to a person of her spirit were very difficult to be borne.

C H A P. X.

Gives the catastrophe of the Oxford ramble, and in what manner the young ladies returned to London.

IF the wounds Mr. Francis had received had been all the misfortune attending Miss Betsy in this adventure, it is probable, that as she every day heard he was in a fair way of recovering, the first gust of passion would have been all she had sustained ; but she soon found other consequences arising from it, which were no less afflicting, and more galling to her pride.

The quarrel between the two young gentlemen, and the occasion of it, was presently blazed over the whole town ; it spread like wild-fire, every one made their several comments upon it, and few there were who endeavoured to find any excuses for the share Miss Betsy and Miss Flora had in it.

The ladies of Oxford are commonly more than ordinarily circumspect in their behaviour, as indeed it behoves them to be, in a place where there are such a number of young gentlemen, many of whom pursue

pursue pleasure more than study, and scruple nothing for the gratification of their desires. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that being from their infancy trained up in the most strict reserve, and accustomed to be upon their guard, against even the most distant approaches of the other sex, they should be apt to pass the severest censures on a conduct, which they had been always taught to look upon as the sure destruction of reputation, and frequently fatal to innocence and virtue.

This being pretty generally the characteristic of those ladies, who were of any distinction, in Oxford, Miss Betsy and Miss Flora immediately found, that while they continued there, they must either be content to sit at home alone, or converse only with such as were as disagreeable to them, as they had now rendered themselves to those of a more unblemished fame.

They had received several visits, all of which they not yet had time or leisure to return; but now going to pay the debt, which complaisance demanded from them, they were denied access at every place they went to: all the persons were either abroad or indisposed; but the manner in which these answers were given, easily convinced Miss Betsy and Miss Flora, that they were no more than meer pretences to avoid seeing them. In the public walks, and, in passing through the streets, they saw themselves shunned even to a degree of rudeness: those of their acquaintance, who were obliged to meet them, looked another way, and went hastily on without vouchsafing a salute.

This was the treatment their late unhappy adventure drew on them, from those of their own sex, nor did those of the other seem to behave to them with greater tenderness or respect, especially the younger students, who all having got the story, thought they had a fine opportunity of exercising

sing their poetic talent ; satire and lampoons flew about like hail : many of these anonymous compositions were directed to Miss Betsey, and thrown over the rails into the area of the house where she lodged ; others were sung under her windows by persons in disguise, and copies of them handed about through the whole town, to the great propagation of scandal, and the sneering faculty.

Never, certainly, did pride and vanity meet with a more severe humiliation, than what these witi-cisms inflicted on those, who by their inconsiderate behaviour had laid themselves open to them. Neither the assurance of Miss Flora, nor the great spirit of Miss Betsey, could enable them to stand the shock of those continual affronts, which every day presented them with. They dreaded to expose themselves to fresh insults, if they stirred out of the doors, and at home they were persecuted with the unwearied remonstrances of their grave landlady, so that their condition was truly pitiable.

Both of them were equally impatient to get out of a place where they found their company was held in so little estimation ; but Miss Betsey thought her brother would not take it well, should she go to London, and leave him in the condition he then was. Miss Flora's importunities, however, joined to the new occasions she every day had for increasing her discontent on staying, got the better of her apprehensions, and she wrote to her brother in the following terms :

TO MR. FRANCIS THOUGHTLESS.

“ Dear brother,

*“ T*HOUGH I am not to my great affliction permitted to see you, or offer that assistance might be expected from a sister in your present situation ; yet I cannot, without
“ the

“ the extremest regret, resolve to quit Oxford, before you are perfectly recovered of those hurts you have received upon my account. However, as by your judging it improper for me to come to you, I cannot suppose you are wholly unacquainted with the severe usage lately given me, and must look on every affront offered to me as an indignity to you, I am apt to flatter myself you will not be offended, that I wish to remove from a place, where innocence is no defence against scandal, and the shew of virtue more considered than the reality.

“ Nevertheless, I shall determine nothing, till I hear your sentiments, which, if I find conformable to mine, shall set out for London with all possible expedition. I would very fain see you before I go, and, if you consent, will come to you so muffled up, as not to be known, by any who may happen to meet me. I shall expect your answer with the utmost impatience, being,

“ My dear brother,

“ By friendship as well as blood,

“ Most affectionately yours,

“ E. THOUGHTLESS.”

When this letter was dispatched, Miss Flora made use of all the arguments she was Mistress of, in order to persuade Miss Betsy to go for London, even in case her brother should not be altogether so willing for it, as she wished he would. Miss Betsy, though no less eager than herself to be out of a place she now so much detested, would not be prevailed upon to promise any thing on this score ; but persisted in her resolution of being wholly directed how to proceed, by the answer she should receive from Mr. Francis.

Miss Flora was so fretted at this perverseness, as she called it, that she told her, in a very great pet, that she might stay if she pleased, and be the laughing-stock of the town; but, for her own part, she had more spirit, and would be gone the next day. Miss Betsey coolly replied, that if she thought proper to do so, she was doubtless at liberty; but believed Mr. Goodman, and even lady Mellasin herself, would look on such a behaviour, as neither consistent with generosity, or common good manners.

It is indeed scarce probable, that the other had the least intention to do as she had said, though she still continued to threaten it, in the most positive and peremptory terms; and this, if we consider the temper of both these young ladies, we may reasonably suppose, might have occasioned a second quarrel between them, if the servant, whom Mr. Francis always sent to his sister, had not that instant come in, and put an end to the dispute, by delivering a letter to Miss Betsey, which she hastily opening, found it contained these lines:

To Miss THOUGHTLESS.

“ *My dear sister,*

“ **I** T is with an inexpressible satisfaction that I
 “ find your own inclinations have anticipated
 “ the request I was just about to make you. I do
 “ assure you, the moment I received your letter, I
 “ was going to write, in order to persuade you to
 “ do the very thing you seem to desire. Oxford
 “ is indeed a very censorious place; I have al-
 “ ways observed it to be so, and have frequently
 “ told the ladies, between jest and earnest, that I
 “ thought it was a town of the most scandal, and
 “ least sin, of any in the world. I am pretty con-
 “ fident some of those, who pretend to give them-
 “ selves airs concerning you and Miss Flora, are as
 “ perfectly

“ perfectly convinced of your innocence as I myself am ; yet after all that has happened, I would not have you think of staying ; and the sooner you depart the better : you need be under no apprehensions on account of my wounds ; those I received from the sword of my antagonist are in a manner healed, and that with the pistol-shot, in my shoulder, is in as fine a way as can be expected, in so short a time. Those I had the fortune to give him, are in yet a better condition ; so that I believe, if it was not for the over caution of our surgeon, we might both quit our rooms to-morrow. I hear that our grave superiors have had some consultations on our duel, and that there is a talk of our being both expelled , but, for my part, I shall certainly save them the trouble, and quit the university of my own accord, as soon as my recovery is completed : my genius is by no means adapted to the study of divinity ; I think the care of my own soul more than sufficient for me, without taking upon me the charge of a whole parish : you may, therefore, expect to see me shortly at London, as it is highly necessary I should consult Mr. Goodman concerning my future settlement in the world. I should be extremely glad of a visit from you before you leave Oxford, more especially as I have something of moment to say to you, which I do not choose to communicate by letter ; but cannot think it at all proper, for particular reasons, that you should come to me, some or other of the gentlemen being perpetually dropping into my chamber ; and it is impossible for you to disguise yourself so as not to be distinguished by young fellows, whose curiosity would be the more excited, by your endeavours to conceal yourself. As this might revive the discourse of an affair, which I could wish might

“ be buried in an eternal oblivion, must desire you
 “ will defer the satisfaction you propose to give
 “ me, till we meet at London, to which I wish
 “ you, and your fair companion, a safe and plea-
 “ sant journey. I am,

“ With the greatest tenderness,

“ My dear sister,

“ Your affectionate brother,

“ F. THOUGHTLESS.”

The receipt of this letter gave an infinity of contentment to Miss Betsy; she had made the offer of going to take her leave of him, chiefly with the view of keeping him from suspecting she wanted natural affection, and was no less pleased with his refusing the request she made him on that account, than she was with his so readily agreeing to her returning to London. Miss Flora was equally delighted; they sent their footman that instant to take places in the stage-coach, and early the next morning set out from a place, which, on their entering into it, they did not imagine they should quit, either so soon, or with so little regret.

CHAP. XI.

Lays a foundation for many events to be produced by time, and waited for with patience.

M I S S Betsy, and Miss Flora, on their coming home, were in some perplexity how to relate the story of their Oxford adventure to lady Mellasin and Mr. Goodman; and it is very likely they would have thought proper to have kept it a secret, if the unlucky duel between Mr. Francis, and the gentleman-commoner, which they were
 sensible

ensible would be a known thing, had not rendered the concealment of the whole utterly impracticable.

As there was no remedy, Miss Flora took upon her to lay open the matter to her Mamma ; which she did with so much artifice, that if that lady had been as austere, as she was really the reverse, she could not have found much to condemn, either in the conduct of her daughter, or Miss Betsy : as to Mr. Goodman, he left the whole management of the young ladies, in these particulars, entirely to his wife, so said little to them on their share of the adventure ; but was extremely concerned for the part Mr. Francis had in it, as he supposed it was chiefly owing to that unlucky incident, that he had taken a resolution to leave the college ; and he very well knew, that a certain nobleman, who was a distant relation of his family, and godfather to Mr. Francis, had always promised to bestow a large benefice, in his gift, upon him, as soon as he should have compleated his studies.

This honest guardian thought he should be wanting in the duty of the trust reposed in him, to suffer his charge to throw away that fine prospect in his view, if by any means he could prevent him from taking so rash and inconsiderate a step : and as to his being expelled, he doubted not, but, between him and Sir Ralph, interest might be made to the heads of the university, to get the affair of the duel passed over. The greatest difficulty he had to apprehend, in compassing this point, was from the young gentleman himself, who he had observed was of a temper somewhat obstinate, and tenacious of his own opinion : resolving, however, to try all means possible, he wrote immediately to him, representing to him, in the strongest and most pathetic terms he was master of, the vast advantages the clergy enjoyed, the respect they had from all degrees of people, and endeavoured to convince

him, that there was no avocation whatever, by which a younger brother might so easily advance his fortune, and do honour to his family.

He also sent a letter to Sir Ralph Trusty, acquainting him with the whole story, and earnestly requesting, that he would write to Mr. Francis, and omit nothing that might engage him to desist from doing a thing so contrary to his interest, and the intentions of his deceased father, as what he now had thoughts of doing was manifestly so. These efforts, by both the guardians were often repeated ; but without the least success : the young gentleman found arguments to oppose against theirs, which neither of them could deny to have weight, particularly that of his having no call to take upon him holy orders. During these debates, in which Miss Betsy gave herself no manner of concern, she received a letter from her brother, containing these lines :

TO MISS BETSY THOUGHLESS.

“ *My dear sister,*
 ‘ **T**HOUGH I flatter myself all my letters
 ‘ afford you some sort of satisfaction, yet by
 ‘ what little judgment I have been able to form of
 ‘ the temper of your sex, have reason to believe,
 ‘ this I now send will meet a double portion of
 ‘ welcome from you. It brings a confirmation of
 ‘ your beauty’s power ; the intelligence of a new
 ‘ conquest ; the offer of a heart, which, if you
 ‘ will trust a brother’s recommendation, is well
 ‘ deserving your acceptance : but, that I may not
 ‘ seem to speak in riddles, you may remember,
 ‘ that the first time I had the pleasure of entertain-
 ‘ ing you at my rooms, a gentleman called True-
 ‘ worth, was with us, and that the next day, when
 ‘ you dined with that person, who afterwards
 ‘ treated you with such unbecoming liberties, he
 ‘ made

' made one of the company ; since then you could
 ' not see him, as he was obliged to go to his seat,
 ' which is about thirty miles off, on an extraordinary
 ' occasion, and returned not till the day after
 ' you left this town. He seemed more than ordi-
 ' narily affected, on my telling him what had hap-
 ' pened, on your account, and after pausing a lit-
 ' tle, ' How unhappy was I,' said he, ' to be ab-
 ' sent ! had I been here, there would have been no
 ' need for the brother of Miss Betsy to have ex-
 ' posed his life to the sword of an injurious anta-
 ' gonist, or his character to the censure of the
 ' university. I would have taken upon myself to
 ' have revenged the quarrel of that amiable lady,
 ' and either have severely chastised the insolence
 ' of the aggressor, or lost the best part of my
 ' blood in the attempt.' I was very much sur-
 ' prized [at these words, as well as at the emphasis
 ' with which they were delivered ; but recovering
 ' myself as soon as I could, ' We are extremely
 ' obliged to you, Sir,' said I, ' but I know not
 ' if such a mistaken generosity, might not have
 ' been fatal to the reputation of us both. What
 ' would the world have said of me to have been
 ' tamely passive, and suffer another to revenge
 ' the affront offered to my sister ? What would
 ' they have thought of her, on finding her honour
 ' vindicated by one who had no concern in it ?'
 ' No concern !' cried he with the utmost eagerness ;
 ' yes, I have a concern, more deep, more strong,
 ' than that of father, brother, or all the ties of
 ' blood could give ; and that you had before now
 ' have been convinced of, had I not been so sud-
 ' denly and so unfortunately called hence.'

' Perceiving I looked very much confounded, as
 ' well I might, ' Ah ! Frank,' cried he, ' I love
 ' your charming sister : my friends have, for these
 ' six months past, been teizing me to think of

“ marriage, and several propofals have been made
 “ to me on that fcore ; but never, ’till I faw the
 “ amiable Mifs Betfy, did I behold the face for
 “ whom I would exchange my liberty : in fine,
 “ ’tis fhe, and only fhe, can make me bleft ; and
 “ I returned to Oxford full of the hopes of an op-
 “ portunity to lay my heart, my perfon, and my
 “ fortune at her feet.

‘ It would require a volume inftead of a letter,
 ‘ to repeat half the tender and paffionate expref-
 ‘ fions he uttered in your favour. What I have
 ‘ already faid is enough to give you a fpecimen of
 ‘ the reft. I fhall only add, that being impa-
 ‘ tient to begin the attack he is determined to make
 ‘ upon your heart, he is preparing to follow you
 ‘ to London with all poffible expedition. I once
 ‘ had thoughts of accompanying him, but have
 ‘ fince thought it proper to have Sir Ralph Truftey’s
 ‘ advice in fomething I have a mind to do, and for
 ‘ that purpofe fhall take a journey into L——e,
 ‘ as foon as I receive remittances from Mr. Good-
 ‘ man, to pay off fome trifling debts I have con-
 ‘ tracted here, and defray my travelling expences ;
 ‘ fo that, if things happen as I wifh they may, my
 ‘ friend’s paffion will have made a confiderable pro-
 ‘ grefs before I fee you.

‘ Indeed, my dear fifter, if you have not already
 ‘ feen a man whofe perfon you like better, you can
 ‘ never have an offer that promifes more felicity :
 ‘ he left the college foon after I came into it, be-
 ‘ loved and refpected by all that knew him, for his
 ‘ difcreet behaviour, humanity, and affability : he went
 ‘ afterwards on his travels, and brought home with
 ‘ him all the accomplifhments of the feveral countries
 ‘ he had been in, without being the leaft tainted with
 ‘ the vices or fopperies of any of them : he has a much
 ‘ larger eftate than your fortune could expect, un-
 ‘ incumbered with debts, mortgages, or poor re-
 ‘ lations :

‘ lations : his family is ancient, and, by the mother’s side, honourable ; but, above all, he has sense, honour, and good-nature,—rare qualities ! which, in my opinion, cannot fail of making him an excellent husband, whenever he comes to be such.

‘ But I shall leave him to plead his own cause, and you to follow your inclinations. I am,

‘ With the most unfeigned good wishes,

‘ My dear sister,

‘ Your affectionate brother,

‘ And humble servant,

‘ F. THOUGHTLESS.

‘ P. S. Mr. Truworth knows nothing of my writing to you in his behalf, so you are at liberty to receive him as you shall think proper.’

Miss Betsy required no less a cordial than this, to revive her spirits, pretty much depressed since her ill usage at Oxford.

She had not time, however, to indulge the pleasure of reflecting on this new triumph, on her first receiving the news of it. Lady Mellasin had set that evening apart to make a grand visit to a person of her acquaintance, who was just married ; the young ladies were to accompany her, and Miss Betsy was in the midst of the hurry of dressing, when the post brought the letter, so she only looked it carelessly over, and locked it in her cabinet till she should have more leisure for the examination.—They were all ready, the coach with the best hammock-cloth and harnesses was at the door, and only waited while Mrs. Prinks was drawing on her lady’s gloves, which happened to be a little too strait.

In this unlucky instant one of the footmen came running into the parlour, and told lady Mellasin,

that there was a very ill-looking woman at the door, who enquired for her ladyship, said she must needs speak with her, and that she had a letter to deliver, which she would give into nobody's hand but her own. Lady Mellasin seemed a little angry at the insolence and folly of the creature, as she then termed it; but ordered she should be shewed into the back parlour; they were not above five minutes together, before the woman went away, and lady Mellasin returned to the room where Miss Betsy and Miss Flora were waiting for her. A confusion not to be described sat on every feature in her face, she looked pale, she trembled, and having told the young ladies something had happened, which prevented her going where she intended, flew up into her dressing-room, followed by Mrs. Prinks, who appeared very much alarmed at seeing her ladyship in this disorder.

Miss Betsy and Miss Flora were also surprised, and doubtless had their own conjectures upon this sudden turn. 'Tis not likely, however, that either of them, especially Miss Betsy, could hit upon the right; but whatever their thoughts were, they communicated them not to each other, and seemed only intent on considering in what manner they should dispose of themselves that evening, it not being proper they should make the visit above mentioned without her ladyship. As they were discoursing on this head, Mrs. Prinks came down, and having ordered the coach to put up, and sent a footman to call a hack, ran up stairs again, in a great hurry, to her lady.

In less time than could almost be imagined they both came down; lady Mellasin had pulled off her rich apparel, and mobbed herself up in a cloak and hood, that little of her face, and nothing of her air, could be distinguished: the too young ladies stared, and were confounded at this metamorphosis.

“ Is

“Is your ladyship going out in that dress,” cried Miss Flora ; but Miss Betsy said nothing “Aye, child,” replied the lady, somewhat faltering in her speech, “a poor relation, who they say is dying, has sent to beg to see me.” She said no more; the hackney-coach was come, her ladyship and Mrs. Prinks stepped hastily into it; the latter, in doing so, telling the coachman, in so low a voice, as no body but himself could hear, to what place he was to drive.

After they were gone, Miss Flora proposed walking in the park ; but Miss Betsy did not happen to be in a humour to go, either there or any where else, at that time, on which the other told her, she had got the spleen ; but said she, “I am resolved not to be infected with it, so you must not take it ill if I leave you alone for a few hours ; for I should think it a sin against common-sense, to sit moping at home without shewing myself to any one soul in the world, after having taken all this pains in dressing.” Miss Betsy assured her, as she might do with a great deal of sincerity, that she should not be at all displeased to be entirely free from any company whatsoever for the whole evening ; and to prove the truth of what she said, gave orders that instant to be denied to whoever should come to visit her. “Well,” cried Miss Flora, laughing, “I shall give your compliments, however, where I am going,” and then mentioned the names of some persons she had just then taken into her head to visit. “As you please for that,” replied Miss Betsy, with the same gay air ; “but don’t tell them it is because I am eaten up with the vapours, that I chose to stay at home rather than carry my compliments in person ; for if ever I find out,” continued she, “that you are so
‘ mischievous,

“ mischievous, I shall contrive some way or other
 “ to be revenged on you.”

They talked to each other in this pleasant manner, ’till a chair Miss Flora had sent for was brought into the hall, in which she seated herself for her intended ramble, and Miss Betsy went into her chamber, where how she was amused will presently be shewn.

CH A P. XII.

Is little more than a continuance of the former.

MISS Betsy had no sooner disengaged herself from the incumbrance of a formal dress, and put on one more light and easy, *à la fresco*, as the Spaniards phrase it, than she began to give her brother’s letter a more serious and attentive perusal, than she had the opportunity of doing before.

She was charmed and elated with the description Mr. Francis had told her, she had inspired in the breast of his friend; she called to her mind the idea of those persons who were present at the entertainments he mentioned, and easily recollected which was most likely to be the lover, though she remembered not the name: she very well now remembered there was one that seemed both times to regard her with glances, which had somewhat peculiar in them, and which then she had interpreted as the certain indications of feeling something in his heart of the nature her brother had described; but not seeing him afterwards, nor hearing any mention made of him, at least that she took notice of, the imagination went out of her head.

This account of him, however, brought to her memory every thing she had observed concern-
 ing

ing him, and was very well convinced she had seen nothing, either in his person or deportment, that was not perfectly agreeable ; yet notwithstanding all this, and the high encomiums given of him by a brother, who she knew would not deceive her, she was a little vexed to find herself pressed by one so dear, and so nearly related to her, to think of him as a man she ever intended to marry : she thought she could be pleased to have such a lover, but could not bring herself to be content that he ever should be a husband. She had too much good sense not to know it suited not with the condition of a wife to indulge herself in the gaieties she at present did, which though innocent, and, as she thought, becoming enough in the present state she now was, might not be altogether pleasing to one, who, if he so thought proper, had the power of restraining them. In fine, she looked upon a serious behaviour as unsuitable to one of her years, and therefore resolved not to enter into a condition, which demanded some share of it, at least for a long time ; that is, when she should be grown weary of the admiration, flatteries, and addresses of the men, and no longer found any pleasure in seeing herself preferred before all the women of her acquaintance.

Though it is certain, that few young handsome ladies are without some share of the vanity here described, yet it is to be hoped, there are not many who are possessed of it in that immoderate degree Miss Betsy was. It is, however, for the sake of those who are so, that these pages are wrote, to the end they may use their utmost endeavours to correct that error, as they will find it so fatal to the happiness of one, who had scarce any other blameable propensity in her whole composition.

This

This young lady was full of meditations on her new conquest, and the manner in which she should receive the victim, who was so shortly to prostrate himself at the shrine of her beauty, when she heard some body run hastily up stairs, and go into lady Mellasin's dressing-room, which being, as has been already taken notice of, on a very remarkable occasion, she stepped out of the chamber to see who was there, and found Mrs. Prinks very busy at a cabinet, where her lady's jewels were always kept: "So, Mrs. Prinks," said she, is my lady "come home?" "No Miss," replied the other, "her ladyship is certainly the most compassionate " best woman in the world; her cousin is very " bad indeed, and she has sent me for a bottle " of reviving drops, which I am going back to " carry." With these words she shuffled something into her pocket, and having locked the cabinet again, went out of the room, saying, "Your ' servant, Miss Betsy; I cannot stay, for life's at " stake."

This put Miss Betsy in the greatest consternation imaginable; she knew lady Mellasin could have no drops in that cabinet, unless they were contained in a phial of no larger circumference than a thimble, the drawers of it being very shallow, and made only to hold rings, croceats, necklaces, and such other flat trinkets: she thought there was something very odd and extraordinary in the whole affair. A strange woman coming in so abrupt a manner,——her refusing to give the letter to any one but lady Mellasin herself,——her ladyship's confusion at the receipt of it,——her disguising herself, and going out with Prinks in that violent hurry,——the latter being sent home,——her taking something out of the casket, and her going back again; all these incidents, I say, when put together, denoted something

something of a mystery not easily penetrated into.

Miss Betsy, however, was not of a disposition to think too much, or too deeply, on those things, which the most nearly concerned herself, much less on such as related entirely to other people; and Miss Flora coming home soon after, and relating what conversation had passed in the visits she had been making, and the dresses the several ladies had on, and such other trifling matters, diverted the other from those serious reflections, which might otherwise, perhaps, have lasted somewhat longer.

When Miss Flora was undressed, they went down together into the parlour, where they found Mr. Goodman extremely uneasy, that lady Mellasin was not come home: he had been told in what manner she went out, and it now being grown dark, he was frightened lest any ill accident should befall her, as she had no man-servant, nor any one with her but her woman, whom, he said, he could not look on as a sufficient guard for a lady of quality, against those insults, which night, and the libertinism of the age, frequently produced.

This tender husband asked the young ladies a thousand questions, concerning the possibility of guessing to whom, and to what part of the town she was gone, in order that he might go himself, or send a servant, to conduct her safely home; but neither of them were able to inform him anything farther, than what has been already related; that she had been sent for to a sick relation, who, as it appeared to them, had been very pressing to engage her ladyship to that charitable office.

Mr. Goodman then began to endeavour to recollect the names and places of abode, of all those he had ever heard her say were of her kindred, for she had never suffered any of them to come to the house,

house, under pretence that some of them had not behaved well, and that others being fallen to decay, and poor, might expect favours from her, and that she would suffer no body belonging to her to be burthen some to him.

He was, notwithstanding, about to send his men in search of his beloved lady, though he knew not where to direct them to go, when she and Mrs. Prinks came home : he received her with all the transports a man of his years could be capable of, but gently chid her for the little care she had taken of herself, and looking on her, as Mrs. Prinks was pulling off her hood, " Bless me, my dear," said he, " what was your fancy for going out in such a dress ?" " My cousin," replied she, is in very wretched circumstances, lives in a little mean lodging, and, besides, owes money ; if I had gone any thing like myself, the people of the house might have expected great things from me. I am very compassionate, indeed, to every one under misfortunes, but will never squander Mr. Goodman's money for their relief."

" I know thou' art all goodness," said the old gentleman, kissing her with the utmost tenderness ; " but something," continued he, " methinks, might be spared" " Leave it to me, Mr. Goodman," answered she, " I know best,—they have not deserved it from me : " She then told a long story, how kind she had been to this cousin, and some others of her kindred in her first husband's time, and gave some instances of the ill use they had made of her bounties. All she said had so much the appearance of truth, that even Miss Betsey, who was far from having an high opinion of her sincerity, believed it, and thought no farther of what had passed ; she had indeed, in a
short

short time, sufficient business of her own to take up all her mind.

Mr. Goodman, the very next day, brought home a very agreeable young gentleman to dine with him, who, though he paid an extraordinary respect to lady Mellasin, and treated her daughter with the utmost complaisance, yet in the compliments he made to Miss Betsy, there was something which seemed to tell her she had inspired him with a passion more tender than bare respect, and more sincere than common complaisance.

She had very penetrating eyes this way, and never made a conquest without knowing she did so ; she was not, therefore, wanting in all those little artifices she had but too much made her study, in order to fix the impression she had given this stranger as indelible as possible : this she had a very good opportunity for doing ; he stayed the whole afternoon, drank tea with the ladies, and left them not, 'till a crowd of company coming in, he thought good manners obliged him to retire.

Miss Betsy was filled with the most impatient curiosity to know the name and character of this person, whom she had already set down in her mind as a new adorer : she asked Miss Flora when they were going to bed, as if it were a matter of indifference to her, and meerly for the sake of chat, who that gentleman was who had dined with them, and made so long a visit ; but that young lady had never seen him before, and was as ignorant of every thing concerning him, as herself.

Miss Betsy, however, lost no part of her repose that night, on this account, as she doubted not but she should very soon be informed by himself of all she wished to know : she was but just out of bed the next morning, when a maid-servant came in to the chamber, and delivered a letter to her, which

which she told her was brought by a porter, who waited for an answer.

Miss Betsey's heart fluttered at the mention of a letter, flattering herself it came from the person, who at present engrossed her thoughts ; but on taking it from the maid, found a woman's hand on the superscription, and one perfectly known to her, though that instant she could not reflect to whom it belonged : she was a good deal surpris'd, when on breaking the seal she found it came from Miss Forward, with whom, as well as the rest of the boarding-school ladies, she had ceased all correspondence for many months. The contents were these :

To Miss BETSEY THOUGHTLESS.

“ *Dear Miss Betsey,*
 “ **T**HOUGH since I had the pleasure of seeing or hearing from you, so many accidents, and odd turns of fortune, have happened to me, as might very well engross my whole attention ; yet I cannot be so far forgetful of our former friendship, as to be in the same town with you, without letting you know, and desiring to see you. Were there a possibility of my waiting on you, I certainly should have made you the first visit ; but alas ! at present there is not.—Oh ! Miss Betsey, I have strange things to tell you ;—things fit only to be trusted to a person whose generosity and good-nature I have experienced. If therefore you are so good to come, I must intreat you will bring no companion with you, and also that you will allow me that favour the first leisure hour ; because I am in some hopes of returning to L——e in a short time. Please to enquire for the house of one Mrs. Nightshade,

“ shade, in Chick-lane, near Smithfield, where
“ you will find her, who, in spite of time, ab-
“ sence, and a thousand perplexing circumstan-
“ ces, is

“ With the most tender regard,

“ My dear Miss Betsy,

“ Your very sincere,

“ Though unfortunate, friend,

“ A. FORWARD

“ P. S. Be so good to let me know, by a line,
“ whether I may flatter myself with the hopes
“ of seeing you, and at what time.”

Though Miss Betsy, through the hurry of her own affairs, had neglected writing to this young lady for a considerable time ; yet she was extremely pleased at hearing from her : she could not imagine, however, what strange turns of fortune they were she mentioned in her letter, and which she supposed had brought her to London. Equally impatient to satisfy her curiosity in this point, as to see a person with whom she had contracted her first friendship, she took pen and paper and immediately wrote this answer :

To Miss FORWARD.

“ *Dear Miss Forward,*

“ **T**HE satisfaction of hearing you were so
“ near me would be compleat, were it not
“ allayed by the hints you give, that some acci-
“ dents, not altogether pleasing, had occasioned it.
“ I long to hear what has happened to you, since
“ last we saw each other, and will not fail to wait
“ on you this afternoon. I know nothing of the
“ part of the town you are in, but suppose a
“ hackney-coach will be able to find its way. I
“ will

“ will detain your messenger no longer, than to
 “ tell you that I am,

“ With the most perfect amity,

“ Deer Miss Forward,

“ Your very affectionate friend,

“ And humble servant,

“ E. THOUGHTLESS.”

Miss Flora had not been present when the maid delivered the letter to Miss Betsey ; but coming into the chamber just as she had finished, and was sealing up the answer to it : “ So,” said she, “ have I catch’d you ? Pray what new lover have “ you been writing to this morning ?” It was in vain that Miss Betsey told her, she never yet had seen the man she thought worthy of a letter from her, on the score of love : the other persisted in her asseverations ; and Miss Betsey to silence her railery was obliged to shew her some part of the letter she had received from Miss Forward.

It being near breakfast time they went down together into the parlour, and as they were drinking their Coffee, “ Well, pretty lady,” said Mr. Goodman to Miss Betsey, with a smile, “ how “ did you like the gentleman that dined here yesterday.” This question so much surpris’d her, that she could not help blushing. “ Like him, “ Sir,” replied she, “ I did not take any notice “ of him.—— I remember a stranger was here, “ and staid a good while, and that is all ; for I “ neither observed any thing he said, or did, or “ thought on him since.” “ The agreeable confusion.” “ cried Mr. Goodman, gaily, “ you “ are in at my mentioning him, makes me believe “ you remarked him more than you are willing to “ acknowledge, and I am very glad of it.—— You “ do him but justice I assure you, for he is very “ much in love with you.

“ Lord,

“ Lord, Sir,” said Miss Betsy, blushing still more, “ I cannot imagine what makes you talk so ; I don’t suppose the man thinks of me any more than I do of him. “ That may be,” rejoined he laughing outright. Lady Mellafin then took up the word, and told her husband, he was very merry that morning. “ Aye,” said he, “ the hurry of spirits I have put poor Miss Betsy in, has made me so ; but I can assure you the thing is very serious ; but,” continued he, “ you shall know the whole of it.”

He then proceeded to inform them, that the person he had been speaking of, was the son of one who had formerly been a merchant ; but who having acquired a large fortune by his industry, had for several years past left off business, and lived mostly in the country ; that the young gentleman had seen Miss Betsy at St. Paul’s rehearsal, when they were all there to hear the music ; that the next day after, he had come to him at a coffee-house, which it was known he frequented, and after asking many questions concerning Miss Betsy, and hearing she was not engaged, declared he was very much charmed with her, and entreated his permission, as being her guardian, to make his addresses to her. Mr. Goodman remembered the affront he had received from alderman Saving on a like occasion, and was determined not to lay himself open to the same from Mr. Staple, (for so he was called,) and plainly told the young lover, that he would encourage nothing of that sort, without the approbation of his father ; that after this he had a meeting with the old gentleman, who being fully satisfied by him of Miss Betsy’s family, fortune, and character, had no objections to make against his son’s inclinations. “ Having this sanction,” continued Mr. Goodman, “ and believing it may be “ a very proper match for both of you, I brought “ him

“ him home with me to dinner yesterday, and
 “ should be glad to know how far you think you
 “ can approve of the offer before I give him my
 “ consent to make it.”

“ I have already told you, Sir,” replied Miss
 Betsy, “ that I took but little notice of the gentle-
 “ man;—or, if I had, should never have asked
 “ myself the question, whether I could like him or
 “ not; for as to marriage, I do assure you, Sir, it is
 “ a thing that has never yet entered into my head.”
 “ Nay, as to that,” returned he, “ it is time e-
 “ nough, indeed.—A good husband, however,
 “ can never come unseasonable.—I shall tell him,
 “ he may visit you, and leave you to answer the
 “ addresses according to the dictates of your
 “ heart.”

Miss Betsy neither opposed, nor gave consent to
 what her guardian said, on this score; but her not
 refusing seemed to him a sufficient grant: so there
 passed nothing more, except some little pleasantries
 usual on such subjects.

C H A P. XIII.

*Contains some part of the history of Miss Forward's
 adventures, from the time of her leaving the
 boarding-school, as related by her herself to Miss
 Betsy.*

MISS Betsy had now her head, though not
 her heart, full of the two new conquests she
 had made: Mr. Trueworth was strongly recom-
 mended by her brother;—Mr. Staple by her guar-
 dian; yet all the idea she had of either of them,
 served only to excite in her the pleasing imagina-
 tion how, when they both came to address her, she
 should play the one against the other, and give her-
 self

self a constant round of diversion, by their alternate contentment or disquiet. As the barometer, said she to herself, is governed by the weather, so is the man in love governed by the woman he admires : he is a meer machine,——acts nothing of himself,——has no will or power of his own, but is lifted up, or depressed, just as the charmer of his heart is in the humour. I wish, continued she, I knew what day these poor creatures would come,——though 'tis no matter,——I have got it seems possession of their hearts, and their eyes will find graces in me, let me appear in what shape soever.

These contemplations, however enchanting as they were to her vanity, did not render her forgetful of the promise she had made *Miss Forward*, and, as soon as dinner was over, ordered a hackney-coach to be called, and went to the place *Miss Forward's* letter had directed.

It is scarce possible for any one to be more surprised than she was, on entering the house of *Mrs. Nightshade*. The father of *Miss Forward* was a gentleman of a large estate, and of great consideration in the county where he lived, and she expected to have seen his daughter in lodgings suitable to her birth and fortune : instead of which, she found herself conducted by an old ill-looking mean woman, who gave her to understand she was the mistress of the house, up two-pair-of-stairs, so narrow that she was obliged to hold her hoop quite under her arm, in order to gain the steep, and almost perpendicular ascent :——she was then shewed into a little dirty chamber, where on a wretched bed *Miss Forward* lay in a most melancholy and dejected posture. “Here is a lady wants you,” said the hag, who ushered in *Miss Betsy*. These words, and the opening the door, made *Miss Forward* start from the bed to receive her visitor in the best manner she could : she saluted, she embraced

braced her with all the demonstrations of joy and affection ; but Miss Betsey was so confounded at the appearance of every thing about her, that she was almost incapable of returning her careffes.

Miss Forward easily perceived the confusion her friend was in, and having lead her to a chair, and seated herself near her, “ My dear Miss Betsey,” said she, “ I do not wonder you are alarmed at
 “ finding me in a condition so different from what
 “ you might have expected : my letter indeed gave
 “ you a hint of some misfortunes that had befallen
 “ me ; but I forbore letting you know of what
 “ nature they were, because the facts, without
 “ the circumstances, which would have been too
 “ long to communicate by writing, might have
 “ made me appear more criminal, than I flatter my-
 “ self you will think I really am, when you shall
 “ be told the whole of my unhappy story.”

Miss Betsey then assured her, she should take a friendly part in every thing that had happened to her, and that nothing could oblige her more than the confidence she mentioned : on which the other taking her by the hand, and letting fall some tears, said, “ O Miss Betsey ! Miss Betsey,——I have suf-
 “ fered much, and if you find a great deal to blame
 “ me for, you will find yet much more to pity.” Then after having paused a little, as if to recollect the passages she was about to relate, began in this manner :

‘ You must remember,’ said she, ‘ that when
 ‘ you left us to go for London, I was strictly watch-
 ‘ ed and confined, on account of my innocent
 ‘ correspondence with Mr. Sparkish ; but that
 ‘ young gentleman being sent to the university soon
 ‘ after, I had the same liberty as ever, and as
 ‘ much as any young lady in the school. The tu-
 ‘ toress, who was with us in your time, being in
 ‘ an ill state of health, went away, and one Ma-
 ‘ demoiselle

‘ demoiselle Grenouille, a French woman, was put in her place : the governess had a high opinion of her, not only on the score of the character she had of her, but also for the gravity of her behaviour. But as demure, however, as she affected to be before her, she could be as merry and facetious as ourselves, when out of her sight, as you will soon perceive by what I have to tell you.

‘ Whenever any of us took an evening’s walk, this was the person to whose care we were entrusted, the governess growing every day more infirm, and indeed unable to attend us.

‘ It was towards the close of a very hot day, that myself, and two more, went with Mademoiselle Grenouille to take a little air in the lane, at the backside of the great road, that leads up to lord ***’s fine seat. We were about the middle of the lane when we heard the sound of French-horns, double-curtalls, and other instruments of wind-music : Mademoiselle at this could not restrain the natural alertness of her country, but went dancing on, ’till we came very near those that played.

‘ You must know, my dear Miss Betsy,’ continued she, ‘ that my lord ***’s park wall reaches to the bottom of this lane, and has a little gate into it : having, it seems, some company with him, he had ordered two tents to be erected in that part of the park ; the one for himself and friends, the other for the music, who sounded the instruments to the healths were toasted : but this we being ignorant of, and delighted with the harmony, wandred on till we came close to the little gate I mentioned, and there stood still listening to it. Some one or other of the gentlemen saw us, and said to the others, ‘ We have Eve’s-droppers ;’ on which they quitted their seats, and

‘ ran to the gate : on seeing them all approach, we
 ‘ would have drawn back, but they were too
 ‘ quick for us ; the gate was instantly thrown open,
 ‘ and six or seven gentlemen, of whom my lord
 ‘ himself was one, rushed out upon us. Perceiving
 ‘ we endeavoured to escape them, they caught
 ‘ hold of us, ‘ Nay, ladies,’ said one of them,
 ‘ you must not think to avoid paying the piper, af-
 ‘ ter having heard his music.

‘ Mademoiselle, on this, addressed herself to my
 ‘ lord * * *, with as much formality as she could
 ‘ assume, and told him, we were young ladies of
 ‘ distinction, who were placed at a boarding school
 ‘ just by, and at present were under her care, so
 ‘ begged no rudeness might be offered. His lord-
 ‘ ship protested on his honour none should ; but
 ‘ insisted on our coming into the park, and drink-
 ‘ ing one glass of whatever wine we pleased ; upon
 ‘ which, ‘ What say you, ladies ?’ cried Made-
 ‘ moiselle, ‘ I believe we may depend on his lord-
 ‘ ship’s protection.’ None of us opposed the mo-
 ‘ tion, as being as glad to accept it as herself. In
 ‘ fine, we went in, and were conducted to the
 ‘ tent, in the midst of which were placed bottles,
 ‘ glasses, jellies, sweetmeats, pickles, and I know
 ‘ not what other things to regale and quicken the
 ‘ appetite. Servants, who attended, cooled the
 ‘ glasses out of a silver fountain, on a little pedestal,
 ‘ at the one end of the tent, and filled every one a
 ‘ glass with what each of us chose. One of the
 ‘ company perceiving our conductress was a French-
 ‘ woman, talked to her in her own language, and
 ‘ led her a minuet round the table ; and, in the
 ‘ mean time, the others took the opportunity of
 ‘ entertaining us : he that had hold of me, so plied
 ‘ me with kisses and embraces, I scarce knew where
 ‘ I was.—Oh ! the difference between his ca-
 ‘ resses and the boyish insipid salutes of master Spar-
 ‘ kish !

‘ kish ! The others, I suppose, were served with
‘ the same agreeable robustness I was ; but I
‘ had not the power of observing them, any more
‘ than, as I afterwards found, they had of me.

‘ In fine, never were poor innocent girls so pressed,——so kissed :——every thing but the dernier
‘ undoing deed, and that there was no opportunity of
‘ compleating, every one of us, our tutoresses not
‘ excepted, I am certain experienced.

“ Heavens !” cried Miss Betsy, interrupting her,
“ how I envied your happiness a moment since,
“ and how I tremble for you now.”

‘ O Miss Betsy, replied Miss Forward, every
‘ thing would have been done in that forgetful
‘ hour ; but as I have already said, there was not
‘ an opportunity. My lover notwithstanding, for
‘ so I must call him, would not let me get out of
‘ his arms, till I had told him my name, and by
‘ what means he should convey a letter to me. I
‘ affected to make a scruple of granting this request,
‘ though heaven knows I was but too well pleased
‘ at his grasping me still faster, in order to compel
‘ me to it. I then gave him my name, and told
‘ him, that if he would needs write, I knew no
‘ other way by which he might be sure of my re-
‘ ceiving his letters, but by slipping it into my
‘ hand as I was coming out of church, which he
‘ might easily do, there being always a great con-
‘ course of people about the door ; On this he gave
‘ me a salute, the warmth of which I never shall
‘ forget, and then suffered me to depart with my
‘ companions, who, if they were not quite so
‘ much engaged as myself, had yet enough to make
‘ them remember this night’s ramble.

‘ The tutoresses knew well enough how to excuse
‘ our staying out so much longer than usual, and
‘ neither the governess, nor any one in the family,
‘ except ourselves, knew any thing of what had

‘ passed. I cannot say but my head ran extremely
 ‘ on this adventure. I heartily wished my pretty
 ‘ fellow might keep his word in writing to me, and
 ‘ was forming a thousand projects how to keep
 ‘ up a correspondence with him. I don’t tell you
 ‘ I was what they call in love ; but certainly I was
 ‘ very near it, and longed much more for Sunday
 ‘ than ever I had done for a new gown : at last the
 ‘ wished-for day arrived,——my gentleman was
 ‘ punctual,——he came close to me in the church-
 ‘ porch,——I held my hand in a careless manner,
 ‘ with my handkerchief in it, behind me, and pre-
 ‘ sently found something put into it, which I hasty-
 ‘ ly conveyed into my pocket, and on coming
 ‘ home, found a little three-corner’d billet, con-
 ‘ taining these lines :

To the charming Miss FORWARD.

“ *Most lovely of your sex,*
 “ I HAVE not slept since I saw you,——so
 “ deep an impression has your beauty made on
 “ my heart, that I find I cannot live without you ;
 “ nor even die in peace, if you vouchsafe not my
 “ last breath to issue at your feet. In pity then to
 “ the sufferings you occasion, grant me a second
 “ interview, though it be only to kill me with your
 “ frowns. I am too much a stranger in these
 “ parts to contrive the means ; be, therefore, so
 “ divinely good to do it for me, else expect to see
 “ me carried by your door a bleeding, breath-
 “ less corps,——the victim of your cruelty, instead
 “ of your compassion, to

“ Your most grateful adorer,
 “ And everlasting slave,

“ R. WILDLY.”
 “ In

‘ In a postscript to this,’ pursued Miss Forward, ‘ he told me, that he would be in the church-porch in the afternoon, hoping to receive my answer by the same means I had directed him to convey to me the dictates of his heart.

‘ I read this letter over and over, as you may easily guess, by my remembering the contents of it so perfectly; but it is impossible for me to express the perplexity I was in how to reply to it. I do not mean how to excuse myself from granting the interview he so passionately requested; for that, perhaps, I wished for with as much impatience as he could do, but I was distracted at not being able to contrive any practicable method for our meeting.

‘ O Miss Betsy, how did I long for you, or such a friend as you, to assist me in this dilemma! but there was no one person in the whole house I dared trust with such a secret:— I could not eat a bit of dinner, nor scarce speak a word to any body; so much were my thoughts taken up with what I should do. I was resolved to see him, and hear what he had to say, whatever should be the consequence; at last I hit upon a way, dangerous indeed in every respect, and shameful in a girl of my condition; yet as there were no other, the frenzy I was possessed of, compelled me to have recourse to it.

‘ You must remember, my dear Miss Betsy,’ continued she, with a deep sigh, ‘ the little door at the farther end of the garden, where by your kind contrivance young Sparkish was introduced: it was at this door I determined to meet Mr. Wildly. This you may be sure could not be done by day, without a discovery, some one or other being continually running into the garden. I therefore fixed the rendezvous at night, at an hour

‘ when I was positive all the family would be in bed, and ordered it in this manner :

‘ Chance aided my ill genius in my undoing : I lay at that time alone ; — Miss Bab, who used to be my bed-fellow, was gone home for a fortnight, on account of a great wedding in their family, and I thought I could easily slip down stairs when every body was asleep, and go through the kitchen, from which you know there is a passage into the garden. I took no care for any thing but to prevent the disappointment of my design ; for I apprehended nothing of ill from a man who adored me, and of whose will and actions I foolishly imagined I had the sole command.

‘ The settling this matter in my mind engrossed all my thoughts, till the bell began to ring for divine service, and I had only time to write these lines in answer to his billet :

TO MR. WILDLY.

“ Sir,

“ I HAVE been always told it was highly
 “ criminal in a young maid, like me, to listen to the addresses of any man without receiving the permission of her parents for so doing ; yet, I hope, I shall stand excused both to them and you, if I confess I am willing to be the first to hear what so nearly concerns myself.
 “ I have but one way of speaking to you, and if your love be as sincere and fervent as you pretend, you will not think it too much to wait between the hours of eleven and twelve this night, at a green door, in the wall which encompasses our garden, at the further end of the lane, leading to that part of lord ***’s park, where we first saw each other ; you will find me, if no cross accident intervenes, at the time and place I mention ;

“ mention ; but impute this condescension to no
“ other motive than that compassion you implore.
“ I flatter myself your intentions are honourable,
“ and in that belief am,

“ Sir,

“ Your humble servant,

“ A. FORWARD.”

Miss Betsy, during the repetition of this letter, and some time before, shook her head, and shewed great tokens of surprize and disapprobation, but offering no interruption, the other went on in her discourse in this manner :

‘ I protest to you, my dear Miss Betsy,’ said she, ‘ that I had nothing in view by this letter, and the assignation it contained, than to secure him to me as a lover. I never had reason to repent of the private correspondence I carried on with Mr. Sparkish, nor knew it was in the nature of man to take advantage of a maid’s simplicity ; but I will not protract the narrative I promised by any needless particulars. Every thing happened but too fortunately, alas ! according to my wish : I found Mr. Wildly in the church-porch, gave him the fatal billet, unperceived by any one : night came on,——all the family were gone to their repose——and I unseen, unheard, and unsuspected, quitted my chamber, and taking the route I told you of, opened the garden door, where it seems the person I expected had waited above half an hour.

‘ His first salutations were the most humble, and withal the most endearing, that could be. ‘ My angel,’ said he, ‘ how heavenly good you are ! permit me thus to thank you.’ With these words he threw himself on his knees, and taking one of my hands, kissed it with the extremest tenderness. But, oh ! let no young woman depend on the

‘ first professions of her lover ; nor on her own
 ‘ power of keeping him at a proper distance.

Here a sudden gush of tears prevented her, for some minutes, from prosecuting her discourse, and Miss Betsey found herself obliged to treat her with more tenderness, than in her own mind she thought the nature of her case deserved.

C H A P. XIV.

Concludes Miss Forward's narrative, and relates some further particulars of Miss Betsey's behaviour, on hearing a detail she so little expected.

HOW sweet are the consolations of a sincere friend ! — how greatly do they alleviate the severest of misfortunes ! — Miss Forward soon dried up her tears, on a soft commiseration she saw they excited in Miss Betsey ; and stifling, as well as she could, the rising sighs with which her bosom heaved, at the remembrance of what she was going to relate, resumed her mournful story in these terms :

‘ You may very well suppose,’ said she, ‘ that
 ‘ the garden door was not a proper place to entertain my lover in : — good manners forbid me
 ‘ to use him in so coarse a manner : besides, late
 ‘ as it was, some passenger might happen to come
 ‘ that way ; I therefore led him into the arbour, at
 ‘ the end of the terrass, where we sat down together, on that broad bench under the arch, where
 ‘ you so often used to loll, and call it your throne
 ‘ of state. Never was there a finer night : — the
 ‘ moon, and her attendant stars, shone with uncommon brightness, the air was all serene, the
 ‘ boisterous winds were all locked in their caverns,
 ‘ and only gentle zephirs, with their fanning wings,
 ‘ wafted

‘ waisted a thousand odours from the neighbouring
‘ plants, perfuming all around.—’Twas an enchant-
‘ ing scene : nature herself seemed to conspire my
‘ ruin, and contributed all in her power to lull my
‘ mind into a soft forgetfulness of what I owed my-
‘ self,—my fame,—my fortune,—and my
‘ family.

‘ I was beginning to tell him, how sensible I
‘ was, that to admit him in this manner, was against
‘ all the rules of decency and decorum, and that
‘ I hoped he would not abuse the good opinion I
‘ had of him, nor entertain the worse of me for
‘ my so readily complying with his request, and
‘ such like stuff : to which he gave little ear, and
‘ only answered me with protestations of the most
‘ violent passion that ever was ;—swore that I
‘ had more charms than my whole sex besides could
‘ boast of ;—that I was an angel ! —a goddess !
‘ that I was nature’s whole perfection in one piece :
‘ then looking on me with the most tender lan-
‘ guishments, he repeated these lines in a kind of
‘ extasy :

‘ In forming thee, heav’n took unusual care ;

‘ Like its own beauty it designed thee fair,

‘ And copied from the best-lov’d angel there.

‘ The answers I made to these romantic enco-
‘ miums were silly enough, I believe, and such as
‘ encouraged him to think I was too well pleased
‘ to be much offended at any thing he did. He
‘ kissed,—he clasped me to his bosom, still silenc-
‘ ing my rebukes, by telling me how handsome I
‘ was, and how much he loved me ; and that as
‘ opportunities of speaking to me were so difficult
‘ to be obtained, I must not think him too presum-
‘ ing if he made the most of this.

What could I do?—how resist his pressures ?

‘ The maid having put me to bed that night, as
‘ usual, I had no time to dress my self again after

‘ I got up, so was in the most loose dishabille that
 ‘ can be imagined. His strength was far superior
 ‘ to mine ;—— there was no creature to come to
 ‘ my assistance ;——the time, ——the place, ——
 ‘ all joined to aid his wishes, and, with the bitter-
 ‘ est regret and shame I now confess it, my own
 ‘ fond heart too much consented.

‘ In a word, my dear Miss Betsey, from one
 ‘ liberty he proceeded to another, till at last
 ‘ there was nothing left for him to ask, or me
 ‘ to grant.’

The last words were accompanied with a second flood of tears, which streamed in such abundance down her cheeks, that Miss Betsey was extremely moved : her good-nature made her pity the distress, tho’ her virtue and understanding taught her to detest and despise the ill conduct which occasioned it : she wept, and sighed, in concert with her afflicted friend, and omitted nothing that she thought might contribute to assuage her sorrows.

Miss Forward was charmed with this generosity in Miss Betsey, and composed herself as much as possible, to make those acknowledgments it merited from her ; and then proceeded to gratify her curiosity with part of her adventures which yet remained untold.

‘ Whenever I recollect,’ resumed she, ‘ how
 ‘ strangely, —— how suddenly, —— how almost
 ‘ unsolicited, I yielded up my honour, some lines,
 ‘ which I remember to have read somewhere,
 ‘ come into my mind, and seem, methinks, per-
 ‘ fectly adapted to my circumstances. — They are
 ‘ these,

‘ Pleas’d with destruction, proud to be undone, }
 ‘ With open arms I to my ruin run, }
 ‘ And sought the mischiefs I was bid to shun : }
 ‘ Tempted that shame a virgin ought to dread,
 ‘ And had not the excuse of being betray’d.

‘ Alas !

‘Alas ! I see my folly now, — my madness, — but was blind to it too long. I upbraided not my undoer : — I remonstrated not to him any of the ill consequences might possibly attend this transaction ; nor mentioned one word concerning how incumbent it was on him, to repair the injury he had done me by marriage : — sure never was there so insatuated a wretch ! Morning began to break in upon us, and the pangs of being obliged to part, and the means of meeting again, now took up all my thoughts. Letting him in at midnight was very dangerous, as old nurse Winter, who you know is very vapourish, often fancies she hears noises in the house, and rises to see if all the doors and windows are fast : besides Mr. Wildly told me, it was highly inconvenient for him, being obliged to make a friend of my lord ***’s porter, to sit up for him.

‘ I was almost at my wit’s end, ’till he recovered me by saying, he believed there might be a more easy way for our intercourse, than this nocturnal rendezvous. ‘ Oh ! what is that ? ’ cried I, earnestly. ‘ The French woman,’ replied he, ‘ that lives here, is good-natured, and of a very amorous complexion ; at least Sir John Shuffle, who toyed with her in my lord’s park, tells me, she is so ; but,’ continued he, ‘ I dare take his word ; he knows your sex perfectly, and, I dare answer, if you will get her to go abroad with you, the consequence will be agreeable to us all.’

‘ What,’ said I, ‘ would you have me make her my confidante ? ’ ‘ Not altogether so,’ said he ; ‘ at least not till you are upon even terms with her ; I mean, till you have secret for secret.’

“ How

“ How can that be ’ demanded I, leave that to
 “ me,” said he, ‘ do you only get her out to-
 “ morrow a walking ; let me know what time
 ‘ you think you can best do it, and Sir John and
 “ I will meet you as if by chance.’ I told him,
 ‘ I would undertake to do it if the weather were
 ‘ fair, and that they might meet us going towards
 ‘ the town, but it must be past five, after she had
 ‘ given her French lesson to the ladies. This be-
 ‘ ing agreed upon, we parted, though not without
 ‘ the extremest reluctance ; at least, I am sure on
 ‘ my side it was sincerely so. I then went back
 “ with the same precaution I had gone out, locked
 ‘ all the doors softly, and got into my chamber be-
 ‘ fore any of the family were stirring.

‘ I was more than ordinarily civil to mademoi-
 ‘ selle all the next day : I said every thing I could
 ‘ think on to flatter her, and having got an oppor-
 ‘ tunity of speaking to her alone, ‘ Dear made-
 ‘ moiselle,’ said I, in a wheedling tone, ‘ I have
 “ a great favour to beg of you.’ What is that,
 “ miss?” replied she, ‘ any thing in my power you
 ‘ may command.’ I then told her, I had got a
 ‘ whim in my head for a new tippet, and that I
 ‘ wanted her fancy in the choice of the colours.
 “ With all my heart,’ said she, and when we go
 “ out a walking this evening, we can call at the
 “ milliner’s, and buy the ribbons.’ ‘ That will
 “ not do,” cried I, ‘ I would not have any of the
 “ ladies know any thing of the matter, ’till I have
 “ made it and got it on ; so no-body must go with
 ‘ us.’ Well, well,” answered she, ‘ it shall be
 ‘ so ; but I must tell the governess.—I know she
 “ will not be against humouring you in such a lit-
 “ tle fancy, and will send the other tutoresses, or
 “ nurse Winter, to wait upon the other ladies.”
 ‘ I told her she was very good, but enjoined her to
 ‘ beg the governess to keep it a secret ; for my
 ‘ tippet

‘ tippet would be mighty pretty, and I wanted to surprise them with the sight of it.’

‘ The governess, however, was so kind as to let us go somewhat before the time we expected, in order to prevent any one from offering to accompany us ; but early as it was, the two gentlemen were on the road. They accosted us with a great deal of complaisance : ‘ What ! my Diana of the forest !’ said Sir John, to mademoiselle, ‘ am I so fortunate to see you once again ?’ What reply she made I do not know, being speaking to Wildly at the same time ; but he also, by my instigations, made his chief court to mademoiselle, and both of them joined to intreat she would permit them to lead her to some house of entertainment : her refusals were very faint, and perceiving, by my looks, that I was not very averse, ‘ What shall we do, miss ?’ said she to me, ‘ there is no getting rid of these men. Shall we venture to go to them ? — ’Tis but a frolic.’ ‘ I am under your direction, mademoiselle ; but I see no harm in it, as to be sure,’ replied I, ‘ they are gentlemen of honour.’

‘ In fine, we went into the first house that had the prospect of affording us an agreeable reception. It is not to be doubted but we were treated with the best the place we were in could supply : Sir John declared the most flaming passion for mademoiselle, and engrossed her so much to himself, that Wildly had the liberty of addressing me, without letting her see his choice gave me the preference.

‘ Sir John after using mademoiselle with some freedoms, which I could perceive she did not greatly resent, told her, there was an exceeding fine picture in the next room, and asked her to go and look upon it. ‘ Oh ! yes,’ replied she, ‘ I am extravagantly fond of painting. Are not
“ you,

“you, Miss?” continued she to me, with a careless air. “No,” said I, “I had rather stay here, and look out of the window; but I would not hinder this gentleman,” meaning Mr. Wildly: who replied, “I have seen it already, so will stay and keep you company.”

“I believe, indeed, we might have spared ourselves the trouble of these last speeches; for our companions seemed as little to expect as to desire we should follow them, but ran laughing, jumping, and skipping out of the room, utterly regardless of those they left behind.

“Thus you see, my dear Miss Betsy, continued she, Wildly had, a second time, the opportunity of triumphing over the weakness of your unhappy friend. Oh! had it been the last, perhaps I had not been the wretch I am; but, alas! my folly ceased not here: I loved,——and every interview made him still dearer to me.

“On mademoiselle’s return, we began to talk of going home: ‘Bless me,’ cried I, ‘’tis now too late to go into town. What excuse shall we make to the governess, for not having bought the ribbonds?’ ‘I have already contrived that,’ replied she, ‘I will tell her, that the woman had none but ugly old fashioned things, and expects a fresh parcel from London in two or three days.’ ‘O that is rare,’ cried I, ‘that will be a charming pretence for our coming out again.’ ‘And a charming opportunity for our meeting you again,’ said Sir John Shuffle. ‘If you have any inclination to lay hold of it,’ rejoined mademoiselle. ‘And you have courage to venture,’ cried he, ‘You see we are no cowards,’ answered she briskly. Well, then, name your day,’ said Wildly, ‘if Sir John accepts the challenge, I will be his second; but I am afraid it cannot be ’till after Thursday, because my lord

“ talks

“ talks of going to ***, and we cannot be back
“ in less than three days.’

‘ Friday therefore was the day agreed upon, and
‘ we all four were punctual to the appointment.
‘ I shall not trouble you with the particulars of our
‘ conversation in this or any other of the meetings
‘ we had altogether, only tell you, that by the
‘ contrivance of one or other of us, we found
‘ means of coming together once or twice every
‘ week, during the whole time these gentlemen
‘ stayed in the country, which was upwards of
‘ two months.

‘ On taking leave, I pressed Wildly to write to
‘ me under cover to mademoiselle Grenouille,
‘ which he promised to do, and I was silly enough
‘ to expect. Many posts arriving without bringing
‘ any letter, I was sadly disappointed, and could
‘ not forbear expressing my concern to mademoi-
‘ selle, who only laughed at me, and told me, I
‘ as yet knew nothing of the world, nor the tem-
‘ per of mankind; — that a transient acquaint-
‘ tance, such as ours had been with these gentle-
‘ men, ought to be forgot as soon as over; —
‘ that there was no great probability we should ever
‘ see one another again, and it would be only a fol-
‘ ly to keep up a correspondence by letters; —
‘ and added, that by this time they were, doubtless,
‘ entered into other engagements; and so might we
‘ too, said she, if the place and fashion we live in
‘ did not prevent us.

‘ I found by this, and some other speeches of
‘ the like nature, that it was the sex, not the per-
‘ son, she regarded. I could not, however, be
‘ of her way of thinking. I really loved Mr.
‘ Wildly, and would have given the world, had I
‘ been mistress of it, to have seen him again; but,
‘ as she said, indeed, there was no probability for
‘ my doing so; and therefore I attempted, through
‘ her

‘ her persuasions, to make a virtue of necessity,
 ‘ and forget both him and all had pass’d between
 ‘ us. I should in the end, perhaps, have accom-
 ‘ plished this point; but oh! I had a remembran-
 ‘ cer within, which I did not presently know of.
 ‘ In fine, I had but too much reason to believe I was
 ‘ pregnant.—A thing, which though a natural con-
 ‘ sequence of the folly I had been guilty of, never
 ‘ once entered into my head.

‘ Mademoiselle Grenouille seemed now terribly
 ‘ alarmed, on my communicating to her my sus-
 ‘ picions on this score: she cried, ’twas very un-
 ‘ lucky!—then paused, and asked what I would
 ‘ do, if it should really be as I feared? I replied,
 ‘ that I knew not what course to take, for if my
 ‘ father should know it I was utterly undone:
 ‘ I added, that he was a very austere man; and,
 ‘ besides, I had a mother-in-law, who would not
 ‘ fail to say every thing she could to incense him
 ‘ against me.

‘ “ I see no recourse you have then,” said she,
 ‘ “ but by taking physic to cause an abortion.
 ‘ “ You must pretend you are a little disordered,
 ‘ “ and send for an apothecary. The sooner the
 ‘ “ better, for if it should become visible, all would
 ‘ “ infallibly be known, and we should both be
 ‘ “ ruined.”

‘ I was not so weak as not to see, that if any
 ‘ discovery were made, her share in the intrigue
 ‘ must come out, and she would be directly turn-
 ‘ ed out of doors; and that whatever concern she
 ‘ pretended for me, it was chiefly on her own ac-
 ‘ count: however, as I saw no other remedy, was
 ‘ resolved to take her advice.

‘ Thus by having been guilty of one crime I
 ‘ was ensnared to commit another, of a yet fouler
 ‘ kind: one was the error of nature, this an of-
 ‘ fence against nature. The black design, how-
 ‘ ever,

‘ ever, succeeded not; I took potion after potion, yet still retained the token of my shame, which at length became too perspicuous for me, to hope it would not be taken notice of by all who saw me.

‘ I was almost distracted, and mademoiselle Grenouille little less so: I was one day alone in my chamber, pondering on my wretched state, and venting some part of the anguish of my mind in tears, when she came in: ‘ What avails all this whimpering, said she, ‘ you but hasten what you would wish to avoid. The governess already perceives you are strangely altered; she thinks you are either in a bad state of health, or some way disordered in your mind, and talks of writing to your father to send for you home.”

“ O heavens!’ cried I, — ‘ Home did you say? — No; I will never go home. The grave is not so hateful to me, nor death so terrible as my father’s presence.’ I pity you from my soul,’ said she, but what can you do? There will be no staying for you here, after your condition is once known, and it cannot be concealed much longer.’ These words, the truth of which I was very well convinced of, drove me into the last despair: I raved, — I tore my hair, — I swore to poison, drown, or stab myself, rather than live to have my shame exposed to the severity of my father, and reproaches of my kindred.

“ Come, come,’ resumed she, ‘ there is no need of such desperate remedies, you had better go to London, and have recourse to Wildly; who knows, as you are a gentleman’s daughter, and will have a fortune, but you may persuade him to marry you? if not, you can oblige him to take care of you in your lying in,
“ and

“ and to keep the child : and when you are once
 “ got rid of your burthen, some excuse or other
 “ may be found for your elopement.”

“ But how shall I get to London ?” resumed I,
 “ how find out my undoer in a place I know no-
 “ thing of, nor ever have been at? Of whom
 “ shall I enquire? I am ignorant of what family
 “ he is, or even where he lives.” ‘ As to that,’
 ‘ replied she, ‘ I will undertake to inform myself
 “ of every thing necessary for you to know, and
 “ if you resolve to go I will set about it directly.’
 ‘ I then told her, I would do any thing, rather
 ‘ than be exposed ; on which she bid me assume
 ‘ as chearful a countenance as I could, and depend
 ‘ on her bringing me some intelligence of Wildly
 ‘ before I slept.

‘ The method she took to make good her pro-
 ‘ mise, was, it seems, to send a person whom she
 ‘ could confide in to the seat of lord ***, to en-
 ‘ quire among the servants where Mr. Wildly,
 ‘ who had lately been a guest there, might be
 ‘ found. She told me, that the answer they gave
 ‘ the man was, that they knew not where he lodg-
 ‘ ed, but that he might be heard of at any of the
 ‘ coffee-houses about St. James’s. As I was alto-
 ‘ gether a stranger in Lodon, this information gave
 ‘ me but little satisfaction ; but madamoiselle Gre-
 ‘ nouille, whose interest it was to hurry me away,
 ‘ assured me that she knew that part of the town
 ‘ perfectly well, having lived there several months
 ‘ on her first arrival in England ; — that there
 ‘ were several great coffee-houses there, frequent-
 ‘ ed by all the gentlemen of fashion, and that no-
 ‘ thing would be more easy than to find Mr.
 ‘ Wildly at one or other of them. My heart,
 ‘ however, shuddered at the thoughts of this enter-
 ‘ prize, yet her persuasions, joined to the terrors
 ‘ I was in of being exposed, and the certainty
 ‘ that

‘ that a discovery of my condition was inevitable,
‘ made me resolve to undertake it. —

‘ Nothing now remained but the means how I
‘ should get away, so as to avoid the pursuit
‘ might, doubtless, be made after me; which
‘ after some consultation was thus contrived, and
‘ executed.

‘ A flying coach sets out from H——— every
‘ Monday at two o’Clock in the morning; ma-
‘ damoiselle Grenouille engaged the same man,
‘ who had enquired at lord ***’s for Mr. Wildly,
‘ to secure a place for me in it. The Sunday be-
‘ fore I was to go I pretended indisposition to a-
‘ void going to church: I passed that time in pack-
‘ ing up the best of my things in a large bundle;
‘ for I had no opportunity of taking a box or trunk
‘ with me. My greatest difficulty was how to get
‘ out of bed from Miss Bab, who still lay with
‘ me. I thought, however, that if she happened
‘ to awake while I was rising, I would tell her I
‘ was not very well, and was only going into the
‘ next room, to open the window for a little air;
‘ but I stood in no need of this precaution, she
‘ was in a sound sleep, and I left my bed, put on
‘ the cloaths I was to travel in, took up my bun-
‘ dle, and stole out of the room, without her
‘ perceiving any thing of the matter. I went out
‘ by the same way by which I had fulfilled my
‘ first fatal appointment with Mr. Wildly; at a
‘ little distance from the garden-door, I found
‘ the friend of madamoiselle Grenouille, who wait-
‘ ed for me with a horse and pillion; he took my
‘ bundle before, and me behind him; and then we
‘ made the best of our way towards H———,
‘ where we arrived time enough for the coach. I
‘ alighted at the door of the inn, and he rode off
‘ directly to avoid being seen by any body, who
‘ might.

‘ might describe him, in case an enquiry should be made.

‘ I will not trouble you with the particulars of my journey, nor how I was amazed on entering this great metropolis ; I shall only tell you, that it being dark when we came in, I lay that night at the inn, and the next morning, following the directions mademoiselle Grenouille had given me, took a hackney coach, and ordered the man to drive into any of the streets about St. James’s, and stop at the first hoose where he should see a bill upon the door for ready furnished lodgings. It happened to be in Rider-street ; the woman at first seemed a little scrupulous of taking me, as I was a stranger, and had no recommendation ; but, on my telling her I would pay her a fortnight beforehand, we agreed at the rate of twelve shillings a week.

‘ The first thing I did was to send a porter to the coffee-houses, where he easily heard of him, but brought me the vexatious intelligence that he was gone to Tunbridge, and it was not known when he would return. This was a very great misfortune to me, and the more so as I had very little money : I thought it best, however, to follow him thither, which I did the same week.

‘ But, oh ! my dear Miss Betsy, how unlucky every thing happened ? he had left that place the very morning before I arrived, and was gone for London. I had nothing now to do but return ; but was so disordered with the fatigues I had undergone, that I was obliged to stay four days to compose my self. When I came back I sent immediately to the coffee-house ; but how shall I express the distraction I was in, when I was told he had lain but one night in town, and was gone to Bath.

‘ This

‘ This second disappointment was terrible indeed : I had but half-a-crown remaining of the little stock I brought from the boarding-school, and had no way to procure a supply, but by selling my watch ; which I did to a gold-smith in the neighbourhood, for what he was pleased to give me, and then set out for Bath by the first coach.

‘ Here I had the good fortune to meet him ; he was strangely surprised at the sight of me in that place, but much more so when I told him, what had brought me there : he seemed extremely concerned at the accident. But when I mentioned marriage, he plainly told me, I must not think of such a thing : that he was not in circumstances to support a family ;—— that having lost the small fortune, left him by his friends, at play, he was obliged to have recourse, for his present subsistence, to the very means by which he had been undone : In short, that he was a gamester. The name startled me : treated, as I had always heard it, with the utmost contempt, I could not reconcile how such a one came to be the guest and companion of a lord, though I have since heard, that men of that profession frequently receive those favours from the nobility, which are denied to persons of more unblemished character.

‘ Wildly, however, it is certain, has some notions of honour and good-nature ; he assured me he would do all in his power to protect me ; but added, that he had been very unfortunate of late, and that I must wait for a lucky chance, before he could afford me any supply.

‘ I stayed at Bath all the time he was there : he visited me every day, but I lived on my own money, ’till we came to town, when my time being very near, he brought me to the place you
‘ find

‘ find me in, having, it seems, agreed with the
 ‘ woman of the house for a certain sum of money
 ‘ to support me during my lying-in, and keep the
 ‘ child as long as it should live. The miseries I
 ‘ have sustained during my abode with this old hag,
 ‘ would be too tedious to repeat. The only joy I
 ‘ have is, that the wretched infant died in three
 ‘ days after its birth, so has escaped the woes,
 ‘ which children thus exposed are doomed to bear.
 ‘ Wildly has taken his last leave of me, and I have
 ‘ wrote to an aunt, entreating her to endeavour
 ‘ to obtain my father’s forgiveness. I pretended
 ‘ to her, that I left L———e for no other reason
 ‘ than because I had an ardent desire to see Lon-
 ‘ don; and, as I think, no-body can reveal to him
 ‘ the true cause, have some hopes of not being ut-
 ‘ terly abandoned by him.’

Here this unfortunate creature finished her long
 narrative, and Miss Betsey saw her in too much af-
 fliction, to express any thing that might encrease it :
 she only thanked her for reposing a confidence in
 her, “ Which,” said she, “ may be of great ser-
 “ vice to me some time or other.”

Before they parted, Miss Forward said, she had
 gone in debt to Mrs. Nightshade, for some few
 things she wanted, over and above what is gene-
 rally allowed in such cases, and had been affronted
 by her for not being able to discharge it, therefore
 entreated Miss Betsey to lend her twenty shillings ;
 on which the generous, and sweet-tempered young
 lady immediately drew her purse, and after giving
 her the sum she demanded, put two guineas more
 into her hand : “ Be pleased to accept this,” said
 she, “ you may possibly want something after hav-
 “ ing paid your debt.” The other thanked her,
 and told her, she doubted not but her aunt would
 send her something, and she would then repay it.
 “ I shall give myself no pain about that,” said
 Miss

Miss Betsy, and then took her leave, desiring she would let her know by a letter what success she had with her friends. Miss Forward told her, she might depend not only on hearing from her, but seeing her again, as soon as she had any thing to acquaint her with.

CHAP. XV.

Brings many things on the carpet, highly pleasing to Miss Betsy, in their beginning, and no less perplexing to her in their consequences.

THE account of those many and dreadful misfortunes, which the ill conduct of Miss Forward had drawn upon her, made Miss Betsy extremely pensive. ‘ ’Tis strange,’ said she to herself, ‘ that a woman cannot indulge herself in the liberty of conversing freely with a man, without being persuaded by him to do every thing he would have her.’ She thought, however, that some excuse might be made for Miss Forward, on the score of her being so strictly debarred from all acquaintance with the other sex. ‘ People,’ cried she, ‘ have naturally an inclination to do what they are most forbid. The poor girl had a curiosity to hear herself addressed, and having no opportunity of gratifying that passion, but by admitting her lover at so odd a time and place, was indeed too much in his power to have withstood her ruin, even if she had been mistress of more courage and resolution than she was.’

On meditating on the follies which women are sometimes prevailed upon to be guilty of, the discovery she had made of Miss Flora’s intrigue with Gayland came fresh into her mind. ‘ What,’ said she, ‘ could induce her to sacrifice her honour?’

‘ Declarations

' Declarations of love were not new to her. She
 ' heard every day the flatteries with which our sex
 ' are treated by the men, and needed not to have
 ' purchased the assiduities of any one of them at so
 ' dear a rate. Good God ! are innocence and the
 ' pride of conscious virtue, things of so little esti-
 ' mation, as to be thrown away for the trifling
 ' pleasure of hearing a few tender protestations ?
 ' Perhaps all false, and uttered by one whose heart
 ' despises the easy fondness he has triumphed over,
 ' and ridicules the very grant of what he so earnest-
 ' ly solicited !'

It is certain, this young lady had the highest no-
 tions of honour and virtue, and whenever she gave
 herself time to reflect, looked on every thing that
 had a tendency to make an encroachment on them
 with the most extreme detestation ; yet had she
 good-nature enough to pity those faults in others,
 she thought it impossible for her to be once guilty of
 herself.

But amidst sentiments as noble, and as generous,
 as ever heart was possessed of, vanity, that foible of
 her soul, crept in, and would have its share. She
 had never been thoroughly attacked in a dishonour-
 able way, but by Gayland, and the gentleman-
 commoner at Oxford ; both which she rebuffed
 with a becoming disdain. In this she secretly exul-
 ted, and had that dependance on her power of re-
 pelling all the efforts, come they in what shape so-
 ever, that should be made against her virtue, that
 she thought it beneath her to behave so as not to be
 in danger of incurring them.

How great a pity it is, that a mind endued with
 so many excellent qualities, and which had such ex-
 alted ideas of what is truly valuable in woman kind,
 should be tainted with a frailty of so fatal a nature,
 as to expose her to temptations, which if she were
 not utterly undone, it must be owing rather to the
 interposition

-interposition of her guardian angel, than to the strength of human reason : but of that hereafter ; at present there were none had any base designs upon her ; we must shew what success those gentlemen met with, who addressed her with the most pure and honourable intentions : of this number we shall speak first of Mr. Truworth and Mr. Staple ; the one, as has been already said, strenuously recommended by her brother, the other by Mr. Goodman.

Mr. Staple had the good fortune (if it may be called so) to be the first of these two who had the opportunity of declaring his passion : the journey of the other to London having been retarded two days longer than he intended.

This gentleman having Mr. Goodman's leave, made a second visit at his house. Lady Mellasin and Miss Flora knowing on what business he was come, made an excuse for leaving him and Miss Betsy together. He made his addresses to her, in the forms which lovers usually observe on the first declaration ; and she replied to what he said, in a manner not to encourage him too much, nor yet to take from him all hope.

While they were discoursing a footman came in, and told her, a gentleman from Oxford desired to speak with her, having some commands from her brother to deliver to her. Mr. Staple supposing they had business took his leave, and Mr. Truworth, for it was he indeed, was introduced.

“ Madam,” said he, saluting her with the utmost respect, “ I have many obligations to Mr. “ Thoughtless ; but none which demands so large “ a portion of my gratitude, as the honour he has “ conferred upon me in presenting you with this “ letter.” To which she replied, that her brother must certainly have a great confidence in his goodness, to give him this trouble ; with these words

she took the letter out of his hand, and having obliged him to seat himself; "You will pardon, Sir," said she, "the rudeness, which my impatience to receive the commands of so near and dear a relation makes me guilty of." He made no other answer to these words than a low bow, and she withdrew to a window, and found the contents of her brother's letter were these :

TO MISS BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

My dear sister,

I SHALL leave Oxford to-morrow, in order to cross the country for the seat of Sir Ralph Trusty, as I suppose Mr. Goodman will inform you, I having wrote to him by the post; but the most valuable of my friends being going to London, and expressing a desire of renewing that acquaintance he had begun to commence with you here, I have taken the liberty of troubling him with the delivery of this to you. He is a gentleman whose merits you are yet a stranger to, but I have so good an opinion of your penetration, as to be confident a very little time will convince you, that he is deserving all the esteem in your power to regard him with : in the mean time doubt not, but you will receive him as a person whose success, in every thing, is much desired by him, who is;

With the tenderest good wishes,

Dear sister,

Your most affectionate brother,

F. THOUGHTLESS.

As she did not doubt but, by the stile and manner of this letter, that it had been seen by Mr. Truworth, she could not keep herself from blushing, which he observing as he sat, flattered himself with taking

taking as a good omen. He had too much awe upon him, however, to make any declaration of his passion at first visit, neither, indeed, had he the opportunity of doing it, lady Mellasin, and Miss Flora, thinking they had left Mr. Staple and Miss Betsy a sufficient time together, came into the room : the former was surprised to find he was gone, and a strange gentleman in his place ; but Miss Flora remembering him perfectly well, they saluted each other with the freedom of persons who were not entire strangers, they entered into a conversation, and other company coming in, Mr. Truworth had an opportunity of displaying the fine talents he was master of: his travels,—the observations he had made on the curiosities he had seen abroad, particularly at Rome, Florence, and Naples, were highly entertaining to the company ; on taking leave he told the ladies, he hoped they would allow him the favour of making one at their tea-table sometimes, while he remained in London : to which lady Mellasin and her daughter, little suspecting the motive he had for this request, joined in assuring him, he could not come too often, and that they should expect to see him every day ; but Miss Betsy looking on herself as chiefly concerned in his admission, modestly added to what they had said, only that a person so much, and she doubted not but so justly, esteemed by her brother, might be certain of a sincere welcome from her.

Every body was full of the praises of this gentleman, and Miss Betsy, though she said the least of any one, thought her brother had not bestowed more on him, than he really deserved. Mr. Goodman coming home soon after, there appeared some marks of displeasure in his countenance, which, as he was the best humoured man in the World, very much surprised those of his family ; but the company not being all retired, none of them seemed

to take any notice of it, and went on with the conversation they were upon before his entrance.

The visitors, however, were no sooner gone, than without staying to be asked, he immediately let them into the occasion of his being so much ruffled: "Miss Betsey," said he, "you have used me very ill: I did not think you would have made a fool of me in the manner you have done." Bless me, Sir," cried she, "in what have I offended?" "You have not only offended against me," answered he, very hastily, "but also against your own reason, and common understanding: you are young, 'tis true, yet not so young as not to know it is both ungenerous and silly to impose upon your friends." "I scorn the thought, Sir, of imposing upon any body," said she; "I therefore desire, Sir, you will tell me what you mean by so unjust an accusation." "Unjust!" resumed he, "I appeal to the whole world, if it were well done of you to suffer me to encourage my friend's courtship to you, when at the same time your brother had engaged you to receive the addresses of another."

Miss Betsey, though far from thinking it a fault in her to hear the proposals of a hundred lovers, had as many offered themselves, was yet a little shocked at the reprimand given her by Mr. Goodman; and not being able presently to make any reply to what he had said, he took a letter he had just received from her brother out of his pocket, and threw it on the table, with these words: "That will shew," said he, "whether I have not cause to resent your behaviour in this point." Perceiving she was about to take it up, "Hold," cried he, "my wife shall read it, and be the judge between us."

Lady Mellasin, who had not spoke all this time, then

then took the letter, and read aloud the contents, which were these :

To Mr. GOODMAN.

Sir,

THIS comes to let you know I have received the remittances you were so obliging to send me. I think to set out to-morrow for L——e, but shall not stay there for any length of time : my intentions for going into the army are the same as when I last wrote to you, and the more I consider on that affair, the more I am confirmed that a military life is most suitable of any to my genius and humour : if, therefore, you can hear of any thing proper for me, either in the guards, or in a marching regiment, against I come to town, I shall be infinitely thankful for the trouble you take in the enquiry ; but, Sir, this is not all the favour I have to ask of you at present. A gentleman of family, fortune, and character, has seen my sister, likes her, and is going to London, on no other business than to make his addresses to her. I have already wrote to her on this subject, and I believe she will pay some regard to what I have said in his behalf. I am very well assured she never can have a more advantageous offer, as to his circumstances, nor be united to a man of more true honour, morality, and sweetness of disposition ; all which I have had frequent occasions of being an eye-witness of : but she is young, gay, and as yet, perhaps, not altogether so capable as I could wish of knowing what will make for her real happiness ; I therefore intreat you, Sir, as the long experienced friend of our family, to forward this match, both by your advice, and whatever else is in your power, which certainly will be the greatest act of goodness you can confer on her,

‘ as well as the highest obligation to a brother, who
 ‘ wishes nothing more than to see her secured from
 ‘ all temptations, and well settled in the world. I
 ‘ am,

‘ With the greatest respect,

‘ Sir,

‘ Your most humble,

‘ And most obedient servant,

‘ F. THOUGHTLESS.’

‘ P. S. I had forgot to inform you, Sir, that the
 ‘ name of the gentleman, I take the liberty of
 ‘ recommending with so much warmth, is True-
 ‘ worth ; that he is descended from the ancient
 ‘ Britons by the father’s side, and by the mother’s
 ‘ from the honourable and well known Oldcas-
 ‘ tle’s, in Kent.’

“ O, fye Miss Betsey,” said Lady Mellasin,
 “ how could you serve Mr. Goodman so ? What
 “ will Mr. Staple say, when he comes to know he
 “ was encouraged to court a woman that was al-
 “ ready pre-engaged.” “ Pre-engaged, Madam,”
 cried Miss Betsey, in a scornful tone, “ what to a
 “ man I never saw but three times in my whole
 “ life, and whose mouth never uttered a syllable
 “ of love to me.” She was going on, but Mr.
 Goodman, who was still in a great heat, interrupted
 her, saying, “ No matter whether he has uttered
 “ any thing of the business or not, it seems you are
 “ enough acquainted with his sentiments, and I
 “ doubt not but he knows you are, or he would
 “ not have taken a journey to London on your ac-
 “ count. You ought therefore to have told me
 “ of his coming, and what your brother had wrote
 “ concerning him, and I should then have let Mr.
 “ Staple know it would be to no purpose to make
 “ any courtship to you, as I did to another just
 ‘ before

“ before I came home, who I find has taken a
 “ great fancy to you ; but I have given him his an-
 “ swer ; for my part I do not understand this way
 “ of making gentlemen lose their time.”

’Tis probable these last words nettled Miss Betsy more than all the rest he had said ; she imagined herself secure of the hearts of both Truworth and Staple, but was vexed to the heart to have lost the addresses of a third admirer, through the scrupulousness of Mr. Goodman, who she looked upon to have nothing to do with her affairs in this particular : she was too cunning, however, to let him see what her thoughts were on that occasion, and only said that he might do as he pleased ; — that she did not want a husband ; — that all men were alike to her : — but added, that it seemed strange to her, that a young woman who had her fortune to make might not be allowed to hear all the different proposals should be offered to her on that score, and with these words flung out of the room, and went up into her chamber, nor would be prevailed upon to come down again that night, though Miss Flora, and Mr. Goodman himself, repenting he had said so much, called to her for that purpose.

CHAP. XVI.

Presents the reader with the name and character of Miss Betsy’s third lover, and also with some other particulars.

THOUGH lady Mellasin had seemed to blame Miss Betsy for not having communicated to Mr. Goodman what her brother wrote to her in relation to Mr. Truworth, yet in her heart she was far from being averse to her receiving a plurality of lovers, because whenever that young lady

should fix her choice, there was a possibility some one or other of those she rejected might transmit his addresses to her daughter, whom she was extremely desirous of getting married, and had never yet been once solicited on honourable terms:— she therefore told her husband, that he ought not to hinder Miss Betsey from hearing what every gentleman had to offer, to the end she might accept that which had the prospect of most advantage to her.

Mr. Goodman in this, as in every thing else, suffered himself to be directed by her judgment, and the next morning, when Miss Betsey came down, talked to her with his usual pleasantry. “ Well,” said he, “ have you forgiven my ill humour last night? I was a little vexed to think my friend Staple had so poor a chance for gaining you, and the more so because Frank Thoughtless will take it ill of me, that I have done any thing in opposition to the person he recommends; but you must act as you please; for my part I shall not meddle any farther in these affairs.

“ Sir,” replied Miss Betsey, very gravely, I shall always be thankful to my friends for their advice, and whenever I think seriously of a husband shall not fail to intreat yours in my choice; but,” continued she, “ one would imagine my brother, by writing so pressingly to you, wanted to hurry me into a marriage whether I would or no; and though I have as much regard for him, as a sister can or ought to have, yet I shall never be prevailed upon by him to enter into a state to which at present I have rather an aversion than inclination.”

“ That is,” said Mr. Goodman, “ you have rather an aversion, than an inclination, to the persons who address you on that score.” “ No,” Sir,” answered she, “ not at all: the persons
“ and

“ and behaviour, both of Mr. Truworth and Mr. Staple, appear to me to be unexceptionable; but sure one may allow a man to have merit, and be pleased with his conversation, without desiring to be tacked to him for ever. I verily believe I shall never be in love; but if I am, it must be a long length of time, and a series of persevering assiduities must make me so.”

Mr. Goodman told her, these were only romantic notions, which, he doubted not, but a little time would cure her of. What reply Miss Betsy would have made is uncertain, for the discourse was interrupted by a footman delivering a letter to her, in which she found these lines :

TO MISS BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

‘ *Fair Creature,*

‘ I AM no courtier, —no beau, —and have
‘ hitherto had but little communication with
‘ your sex; but I am honest and sincere, and you
‘ may depend on the truth of what I say. I have,
‘ heaven be praised, acquired a very large fortune,
‘ and for some time have had thoughts of marrying,
‘ to the end I might have a son to enjoy the fruit
‘ of my labours, after I am food either for the
‘ fishes, or the worms : — it is no great matter
‘ which of them. Now I have been wished to se-
‘ veral fine women, but my fancy gives the prefer-
‘ ence to you; and if you can like me as well, we
‘ shall be very happy together. I spoke to your
‘ guardian yesterday, for I love to be above-board;
‘ but he seemed to lour, or, as we say at sea, to
‘ be a little hazy on the matter, so I thought I
‘ would trouble him no farther, but write directly
‘ to you. I hear there are two about you; but
‘ what of that? I have doubled the Cape of Good
‘ Hope many a time, and never failed of reaching

‘ my intended port, I therefore see no cause why
 ‘ I should apprehend a wreck by land. I am turn-
 ‘ ed of eight and forty, ’tis true, which may-be
 ‘ you may think too old ; but I must tell you, dear
 ‘ pretty one, that I have a constitution that will
 ‘ wear out twenty of your washy pampered land-
 ‘ men of not half my age. Whatever your for-
 ‘ tune is I will settle accordingly, and moreover
 ‘ will secure something handsome to you at my de-
 ‘ cease, in case you should chance to be the longest
 ‘ liver. I know you young women do not care a
 ‘ man should have any thing under you hand, so ex-
 ‘ pect no answer ; but desire you will consider on
 ‘ my proposals, and let me know your mind this
 ‘ evening at five o’clock, when I shall come to
 ‘ Mr. Goodman’s, let him take it how he will. I
 ‘ can weather out any storm to come at you ; and
 ‘ sincerely am,

‘ Dear Soul,

‘ Your most faithful,

‘ And affectionate lover,

‘ J. HYSOM.’

There were some passages in this letter that set
 Miss Betsy into such immoderate fits of laughter, as
 made her a long time in going through it. Having
 finished the whole, she turned to Mr. Goodman,
 and putting it into his hands, “ Be pleased, Sir,
 “ to read that,” said she, “ you shall own, at
 “ least, that I do not make a secret of all my
 “ lovers to you.” Mr. Goodman soon looked it
 over, and after returning it to her, “ How trou-
 “ blefome a thing it is,” said he, “ to be the guar-
 “ dian of a beautiful young lady ! whether I grant,
 “ or whether I refuse the consent required of
 “ me, I equally gain ill-will from one side or the
 “ other.”

Lady

Lady Mellasin, who had all this morning complained of a violent head-ach, and said nothing during this conversation, now cried out, "What new conquest is this Miss Betsy has made?" "O, madam, replied Miss Betsy, "your ladyship shall judge of the value of it, by the doughty epistle I have just received." With these words she gave the letter to Miss Flora, desiring her to read it aloud, which she did, but was obliged, as Miss Betsy herself had done, to stop several times, and hold her sides, before she got to the conclusion, and lady Mellasin, as little as she was then inclined to mirth, could not forbear smiling at hearing the manner in which this declaration of love was penned. "You are all very merry," said Mr. Goodman, "but I can tell you, captain Hysom is a match that many a fine lady in this town would jump at; he has been twenty-five years in the service of the East-India company, has made very successful voyages, and is immensely rich; he has lived at sea, indeed, the greatest part of his life, and much politeness cannot be expected from him; but he is a very honest good-natured man, and I believe means well. I wish he had offered himself to Flora." Perhaps, Sir, I should not have refused him," replied she, briskly; "I should like a husband prodigiously that would be abroad for three whole years together, and leave me to bowl about in my coach and six, while he ploughed the ocean in search of new treasures to throw into my lap at his return."

"Well, well," said Miss Betsy, laughing still more, "who knows but when I have teized him a little, he may fly for shelter to your more elegant goodness." Aye! aye," cried Mr. Goodman, "you are a couple of mad-caps, indeed, and I suppose between you both the captain will be finely managed, but no matter, I shall not pity

“pity him, as I partly told him what he might expect.”

After this Mr. Goodman went out, and the young ladies went up to dress against dinner, diverting themselves all the time with the poor captain's letter. Miss Betsey told Miss Flora, that as he was for coming so directly to the point, she must use all her artifice, in order to keep him in suspense ; “for,” said she, “if I should let him know any part of my real sentiments concerning him, he would be gone at once, and we should lose all our sport : I will, therefore,” continued she, “make him believe, that I dare not openly encourage his pretensions, because my brother had recommended one gentleman to me, and Mr. Goodman another ; but shall assure him, at the same time, that I am inclined to neither of them, and shall contrive to get rid of them both, as soon as possible : this,” said she, “will keep him in hopes, without my downright promising any thing in his particular favour.”

Miss Flora told her, she was a perfect Machiavel in love affairs, and was about to say something more, when a confused sound of several voices, among which she distinguished that of lady Mellasin very loud, made her run down stairs to see what was the occasion ; but Miss Betsey stayed in the chamber, being busily employed in something belonging to her dress, or had she been less engaged, it is not probable she would have troubled herself about the matter, as she supposed it only a quarrel between lady Mellasin, and some of the servants, as in effect it was, and she, without asking, was immediately informed.

Nanny, the upper house-maid, and the same who had delivered Mr. Saving's letter to Miss Betsey, and carried her answer to him, coming up with a broom in her hand, in order to sweep her
lady's

lady's dressing-room, ran into the chamber of Miss Betsy, and seeing that she was alone, "O Miss!" said she, "there is the devil to do below." "I heard a sad noise, indeed," said she carelessly. "Why you must know, Miss," cried the maid, "that my lady had given John the butler warning, and so his time being up, Mrs. Prinks had orders to pay him off this morning, but would have stopped thirty shillings for a silver orange-strainer that is missing. John would not allow it, and being in a passion, told Mrs. Prinks, that he would not leave the house without his full wages, that for any thing he knew the strainer might be gone after the diamond necklace. This I suppose she repeated to my lady, and that put her in so ill a humour this morning, that if my master had not come down as he did, we should all have had something at our heads. However," continued the wench, "she ordered Mrs. Prinks to give him his whole money; but, would you believe it Miss? My master was no sooner gone out, than she came down into the kitchen raving, and finding John there still, (the poor fellow, God knows, only stayed to take his leave of us,) she tore about, and swore we should all go; accused one of one thing, and another of another." "Well, but what did the fellow mean about the diamond necklace?" cried Miss Betsy, interrupting her. "I will tell you the whole story," said she, but you must promise never to speak a word of it to any body; for though I do not value the place, nor will stay much longer; yet they would not give one a character, you know, Miss."

Miss Betsy then having assured her, she would never mention it, the other shut the door, and went on in a very low voice, in this manner.

Don't

‘Don’t you remember, Miss?’ said she, ‘what a flurry my lady and Mrs. Prinks were in one day? how her ladyship pulled off all her fine cloaths, and they both went out in a hackney coach; then Mrs. Prinks came home, and went out again?’ ‘Yes,’ replied Miss Betsey, ‘I took notice they were both in a good deal of confusion.’ ‘Aye, Miss, well they might,’ said Nanny; ‘that very afternoon John was gone to see a cousin that keeps a pawn-broker’s shop in Thieving-lane, and as he was sitting in a little room behind the counter, that it seems shuts in with glass doors, who should he see through the window, but Mrs. Prinks come in; she brought my lady’s diamond necklace, and pledged it for a hundred and twenty, or a hundred and thirty guineas, I am not sure which he told me, for I have the saddest memory; but it is no matter for that. John was strangely confounded, as you may think, but resolved to see into the bottom, and when Mrs. Prinks was got into the coach, popped up behind it, and got down when it stopped, which was at the sign of the hand and tipstaff in Knaves-acre; so that this money was raised to get somebody that was arrested out of the bailiff’s hands, for John said, it was what they call a spunging-house that Mrs. Prinks went into. Lord! how deceitful some people are, my poor master little thinks how his money goes; but I’ll warrant our house-keeping must suffer for this.’

This gossiping young hussey would have run on much longer, doubtless, with her comments on this affair; but hearing Miss Flora’s foot upon the stairs, she left off, and opening the door, softly slipped into her lady’s dressing-room, and fell to work in cleaning it.

Miss Flora came up, exclaiming on the ill behaviour of most servants, telling Miss Betsey what a passion

a passion her mamma had been in. The other made little answer to what she said on that or any other score, having her thoughts very much taken up with the account just given her by Nanny; she recollected that lady Mellafin had never dressed since that day, always making some excuse to avoid paying any grand visits, which she now doubted not but it was because she had not her necklace. It very much amazed her, as she well knew her ladyship was never without a good deal of ready cash, therefore was certain the sum must be large indeed, for which her friend was arrested, that it reduced her to the necessity of applying to a pawnbroker, and who that friend could be for whom she would thus demean herself, puzzled her extremely. It was not long, however, before she was let into the secret, but in the mean time other matters of more moment must be treated on.

C H A P. XVII.

Is of less importance than the former, yet must not be omitted.

LADY Mellafin having vented her spleen on those, who by their stations were obliged to bear it, and the object of it removed out of the house, became extremely chearful the remaining part of the day. The fashion in which it might be supposed Miss Betsy would be accosted by her tar-paulin enamorado, and the reception she would give his passion, occasioned a great deal of merriment, and even Mr. Goodman, seeing his dear wife took part in it, would sometimes throw in his joke.

“ Well,

“ Well, well,” cried Miss Betsey, to heighten the diversion, “ what will you say now, if I should take a fancy to the captain, so far as to prefer him to any of those who think it worth their while to solicit me on the score of love?”

“ This is quite ungenerous in you,” cried Miss Flora, “ did you not promise to turn the captain over to me, when you had done with him.”— “ That may not happen a great while,” replied the other; “ for I assure you I have seen him three or four times, when he has called here on business to Mr. Goodman, and think to part with a lover of his formidable aspect would be to deprive myself of the most conspicuous of my whole train of admirers;—but suppose,” continued she, in the same gay strain, “ I resign to you Mr. Staple or Mr. Truworth, would not that do as well?”

“ Do not put me in the head of either of them, I beseech you,” said Miss Flora, “ for fear I should think too seriously on the matter, and it should not be in your power to oblige me.”

“ All that must be left to chance,” cried Miss Betsey: “ but so far I dare promise you, as to do enough to make them heartily weary of their courtship to me, and at liberty to make their addresses elsewhere.”

After this they fell into some conversation concerning the merits of the two last mentioned gentlemen:—they allowed Mr. Staple to have the finest face, and that Mr. Truworth was the best shaped, and had the most graceful air in every thing he did:—Mr. Staple had an infinity of gaiety, both in his look and behaviour:—Mr. Truworth had no less of sweetness, and if his deportment seemed somewhat too serious for a man of his years, it was well atoned for by the excellence of his understanding.—Miss Flora however said
upon

upon the whole; that both of them were charming men, and lady Mellasin added, that it was a great pity either of them should have bestowed his heart where there was so little likelihood of ever receiving any recompence.—“Why so, my dear,” cried Mr. Goodman, “if my pretty charge is at present in a humour to make as many fools as she can in this world, I hope she is not deter- mined to lead apes in another;—I warrant she will change her mind one time or other.— I only wish she may not, as the old saying is, out stand her market.”

While they were thus discoursing, a servant brought a letter from Mr. Staple, directed to Miss Betsy Thoughtless, which was immediately delivered to her:—on being told from whence it came, gave it to Mr. Goodman, saying, “I shall make no secret of the contents.—therefore, dear guardian, read it for the benefit of the company.”

Mr. Goodman shook his head at the little sensibility she testified of his friend’s devoirs, but said nothing, being willing to gratify the curiosity he doubted not but they all were in, Miss Betsy herself not excepted, as careless as she affected to be, which he did by reading in an audible voice these lines :

To the most amiable and most accomplished of
her sex.

‘ *Madam,*

‘ **I**F the face be the index of the mind, (as I think
‘ one of our best poets takes upon him to as-
‘ sert) your soul must certainly be all made up of
‘ harmony, and consequently take delight in what
‘ has so great a similitude of its own heavenly na-
‘ ture.—I flatter my self, therefore, you will not
‘ be

‘ be offended that I presume to intreat you will
 ‘ grace with your presence, a piece of music, com-
 ‘ posed by the so justly celebrated signor Bonan-
 ‘ cini, and I hope will have justice done it in the
 ‘ performance, — they being the best hands in
 ‘ town that are employed.

‘ I do myself the honour to inclose tickets for
 ‘ the ladies of Mr. Goodman’s family, and beg
 ‘ leave to wait on you this afternoon, in the plea-
 ‘ sing expectation, not only of being permitted to
 ‘ attend you to the concert, but also of an oppor-
 ‘ tunity of renewing those humble and sincere pro-
 ‘ fessions I yesterday began to make, of a passion,
 ‘ which only charms such as yours could have the
 ‘ power of inspiring in any heart, and can be felt
 ‘ by none with greater warmth, zeal, tenderness,
 ‘ and respect, than by that of him who is, and e-
 ‘ ver must be,

Madam,

‘ Your most passionate,

‘ And most faithful admirer,

‘ T. STAPLE.

‘ P. S. If there are any other ladies of your ac-
 ‘ quaintance, to whom you think the entertain-
 ‘ ment may be agreeable, be pleased to make
 ‘ the invitation, — I shall bring tickets with
 ‘ me to accommodate whoever you choose to
 ‘ accompany you. — Once more I beseech you,
 ‘ madam, to believe me as above,

‘ Yours, &c.’

Mr. Goodman had scarce finished reading this
 letter; when lady Mellasin and her daughter both
 cried out, at the same time, “ O Miss Betsy, —
 “ how unlucky this happens : — what will you
 “ do with the captain now ?

“ We

"We will take him with us to the concert," replied she; — "and in my opinion nothing could have fallen out more fortunately. — The captain has appointed to visit me at five, — Mr. Staple will, doubtless, be here about that time, if not before, in order to usher us to the entertainment, so that my father cannot expect any answer from me to his letter, and consequently I shall gain time."

Though Mr. Goodman was far from approving this way of proceeding, yet he could not forbear smiling with the rest, at Miss Betsy's contrivance, and told her, it was a pity she was not a man, she would have made a rare minister of state.

"Well, since it is so," said lady Mellasin, "I will have the honour of complimenting the captain with the ticket Mr. Staple intended for me." Both Miss Flora and Miss Betsy pressed her ladyship to be of their company, and Mr. Goodman likewise endeavoured to persuade her to go; but she excused herself, saying, "A concert was never among the number of those entertainments she took pleasure in:" on which they left off speaking any farther on it; — but Miss Betsy was not at a loss in her own mind to guess the true reason of her ladyship's refusal, and looked on it as a confirmation of the truth of what Nanny had told her, concerning the diamond necklace.

There seemed, notwithstanding, one difficulty still remaining for Miss Betsy to get over; which was the probability of Mr. Truworth's making her a visit that afternoon; — she did not choose to leave him to go to the concert, nor yet to ask him to accompany them to it, because she thought it would be easy for a man of his penetration to discover that Mr. Staple was his rival; which she was by no means willing he should do before he had made a declaration to her of his own passion.

She

She was beginning to consider how she should manage in a point, which she looked upon as pretty delicate, when a letter from that gentleman eased her of all the apprehensions she at present had, on his score.—The manner in which he expressed himself was as follows :

TO MISS BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

* *Madam,*

I Remember (as what can be forgot in which you have the least concern) that the first time I had the honour of seeing you at Oxford, you seemed to take a great deal of pleasure in the pretty tricks of a squirrel, which a lady in the company had on her arm :—one of those animals (which they tell me has been lately caught) happening to fall in my way, I take the liberty of presenting him to you, intreating you will permit him to give you such diversion as is in his power. — Were the little denizen of the woods endued with any share of human reason, how happy would he think himself in the loss of his liberty, and how hug those chains which entitle him to so glorious a servitude.

I had waited on you in person, in the hope of obtaining pardon for approaching you with so trifling an offering ; but am deprived of that satisfaction by the pressing commands of an old aunt, who insists on my passing this evening with her :—but what need is there to apologize for the absence of a person so little known to you, and whose sentiments are yet less so ? I rather ought to fear that the frequency of those visits I shall hereafter make, may be looked upon as taking too presuming an advantage of the permission you have been so good to give me. I will not, however, anticipate so great a misfortune, but endeavour

‘ YOUR

‘ your to prevent it by proving, by all the ways I
‘ am able, that I am,
‘ With the most profound submission,
‘ Madam,
‘ Your very humble, obedient,
‘ And eternally devoted servant,
‘ C. TRUEWORTH.’

Miss Betsy, after having read this letter, ordered the person who brought it should come into the parlour; on which he delivered to her the present mentioned in the letter, which she received with a great deal of sweetness, gave the fellow something to drink her health, and sent her service to his master, with thanks, and an assurance that she should be glad to see him, whenever it suited with his convenience.

All the ladies then began to examine the squirrel, which was, doubtless, the most beautiful creature of its kind, that could be purchased: the chain, which fastened it to its habitation, was gold, the links very thick, and curiously wrought.—Every one admired the elegance of the donor’s taste.

Miss Betsy herself was charmed to an excess, both with the letter and the present; but as much as she was pleased with the respectful passion of Mr. Truworth, she could not find in her heart to think of parting with the assiduities of Mr. Staple, nor even the blunt addresses of captain Hysom, at least ’till she had exercised all the power her beauty gave her over them.

As the two last mentioned gentlemen were the friends of Mr. Goodman, he went out somewhat before the hour in which either of them was expected to come, chusing not to seem to know what it was not in his power to amend, and determined, as he had promised Miss Betsy, not to interfere between

tween her and any of those who pretended to court her.

These two lovers came to the door at the same time, and Mr. Staple saying to the footman that opened the door, that he was come to wait on Miss Betsey.——“ I want to speak with that young gentlewoman too,” cried the captain, “ if she be at leisure: —— tell her my name is Hyfom.”

Mr. Staple was immediately shewed up into the dining-room, and the captain in the parlour, ’till Miss Betsey should be told his name: “ That spark,” said he to himself, “ I find is known here, I suppose he is one of those Mr. Goodman told me of, that has a mind to Miss Betsey ; but as she knew I was to be here, I think she might have left some orders concerning me, and not made me wait till that young gew-gaw had spoke his mind to her.”

The fellow not coming down immediately, he grew very angry, and began to call and knock with his cane against the floor, which, it may be easily imagined, gave some sport to those above.—— Miss Betsey, however, having told Mr. Staple the character of the man, and the diversion she intended to make of his pretensions, would not vex him too much, and to atone for having made him attend so long, went to the top of the stairs herself, and desired him to walk up.

The reception she gave him was full of all the sweetness she could assume, and excused having made him wait, and laid the blame on the servant, who, she pretended, could not presently recollect his name:——this put him into an exceeding good humour, “ Nay, fair lady,” said he, “ as to that I have stayed much longer sometimes, before I could get to the speech of some people, who I
“ have

“ have not half the respect for as I have for you ;
“ ——but you know,” continued he, giving her
a kiss, the smack of which might be heard three
rooms off, “ that I have business with you, ——
“ business that requires dispatch, and that made me
“ a little impatient.”

All the company had much ado to refrain laughing out-right, but Miss Betsy kept her countenance to a miracle, “ We will talk of business another
“ time,” said she, “ we are going to hear a fine
“ entertainment of musick ;——you must not re-
“ fuse giving us your company, —— lady Mellasin
“ has got a ticket on purpose for you. ——“ I am
“ very much obliged to her ladyship,” replied the
captain, “ but I do not know whether Mr. Good-
“ man may think well of it or not ; for he would
“ fain have put me off from visiting his charge
“ here. ——I soon found by his way of speaking the
“ wind did not set fair for me from that quarter, so
“ tacked about, ——shifted my sails, and stood for
“ the port directly.”

“ Manfully resolved, indeed !” said Mr. Staple ;
“ but I hope, captain, you have kept a good look-
“ out, in order to avoid any ship of greater bur-
“ then, that might else chance to overset you.” ——
“ Oh, Sir ! as to that,” replied the captain, “ you
“ might have spared yourself the trouble of giving
“ me this caution, there are only two small pinks
“ in my way, and they had best stand clear, or I
“ shall run foul of them.”

Though Mr. Staple had been apprized before-
hand of the captain’s pretences, and that Miss Betsy
intended to encourage them only by way of amuse-
ment to herself and friends, yet the rough manner in
which his rival had uttered these words, brought the
blood into his cheeks, which lady Mellasin perceiv-
ing, and fearing that what was began in jest might in
the end become more serious than could be wished,
turned

turned the conversation, and addressing herself to the captain, on the score of what he had said concerning Mr. Goodman, made many apologies for her husband's behaviour in this point :—— assured him, that he had not a more sincere friend in the world, nor one who would be more ready to serve him, in whatever was in his power.

The captain had a fund of great good-nature in his heart, but was somewhat too much addicted to passion, and frequently apt to resent without a cause, but when once convinced he had been in the wrong, no one could be more ready to acknowledge and ask pardon for his mistake :—— he had been bred at sea ;—— his conversation, for almost his whole life, had been chiefly among those of his own occupation ;—— he was altogether unacquainted with the manners and behaviour of the polite world, and equally a stranger to what is called genteel raillery, as he was to courtly complaisance ; it is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that he was often rude, without designing to be so, and took many things as affronts, which were not meant as such.

Lady Mellasin, who never wanted words, and knew how to express herself in the most persuasive terms, whenever she pleased to make use of them, had the address to convince the captain, that Mr. Goodman was no enemy to his suit, though he would not appear to encourage it.

While the captain was engaged with her ladyship in this discourse, Miss Betsy took the opportunity of telling Mr. Staple that she insisted upon it, that he should be very civil to a rival from whose pretensions he might be certain he had nothing to apprehend, and moreover that when she gave him her hand to lead her into the concert-room, he should give his to Miss Flora, without discovering the least marks of discontent :—— the lover looked on this

this last injunction as too severe a trial of his patience ; but she would needs have it so, and he was under a necessity of obeying, or of suffering much greater mortification from her displeasure.

Soon after this they all four went to the entertainment in Mr. Goodman's coach, which lady Mellafin had ordered to be got ready. — The captain was mightily pleased with the music, and had judgment enough in it to know it was better than the band he had on board his ship : —

“ When they have done playing,” said he, “ I will ask them what they will have to go with me the next voyage ;” but Mr. Staple told him, it would be an affront, that they were men who got more by their instruments than the best officer either by sea or land did by his commission. —

This mistake, as well as many others the captain fell into, made not only the company he was with, but those who sat near enough to hear him, a good deal of diversion.

Nothing of moment happening either here, or at Mr. Goodman's, where they all supped together, it would be needless to repeat any particulars of their conversation ; what has been said already of their different sentiments and behaviour, may be a sufficient sample of the whole.

C H A P. XVIII.

Treats on no fresh matters, but serves to heighten those already mentioned.

MR. Goodman had staid abroad 'till very late that night the concert had been performed, so was not a witness of any thing that had passed after the company came home ; but on lady Mellafin's

fin's repeating to him every thing she remembered, was very well pleased to hear that she had reconciled the captain to him, though extremely sorry, that the blunt ill-judged affection of that gentleman had exposed him to the ridicule, not only of Miss Betsy, but also of all her followers.

That young lady, in the mean time, was far from having any commiseration for the anxieties of those who loved her;—on the contrary, she triumphed in the pains she gave, if it can be supposed that she, who was altogether ignorant of them in herself, could look upon them as sincere in others:—but I am apt to believe ladies of this cast, regard all the professions of love made to them, (as indeed many of them are) only as words of course,—the prerogative of youth and beauty in the one sex, and a duty incumbent on the other to pay;—they value themselves on the number and quality of their lovers, as they do upon the number and richness of their clothes, because it makes them of consideration in the world, and never take the trouble of reflecting how dear it may sometimes cost those to whom they are indebted for indulging this vanity.

That this, at least, was the motive which induced Miss Betsy to treat her lovers in the manner she did, is evident to a demonstration, from every other action of her life:—she had a certain softness in her disposition, which rendered her incapable of knowing the distress of any one, without affording all the relief was in her power to give, and had she sooner been convinced of the reality of the woes of love, she sooner had left off the ambition of inflicting them, and perhaps have been brought to regard those who laboured under them, rather with too much than too little compassion;—but of this the reader will be able to judge on proceeding farther in this history.

There

There were now three gentlemen who all of them addressed this young lady on the most honourable terms, yet did her giddy mind make no distinction between the serious passion they had for her, and the idle gallantries she received from those who either had no design in making them, or such as tended to her undoing.

Impatient to hear in what fashion Mr. Truworth would declare himself, and imagining he would come the next day, as he had made so handsome an apology for not having waited on her the preceding one, she told Mr. Staple and captain Hysom, in order to prevent their coming, that she was engaged to pass that whole afternoon, and evening, with some ladies of her acquaintance : neither the captain nor Mr. Staple suspected the truth of what she said, but the former was in too much haste to know some issue of his fate to be quite contented with this delay.

Miss Betsy was not deceived in her expectations ; — soon after dinner was over, she was told Mr. Truworth had sent to know if she was at home, and beg leave to wait upon her. — Lady Mellasin having a great deal of company that day in the dining-room, she went into an adjacent one to receive him ; — he was charmed at finding her alone, a happiness he could not flatter himself with, on entering the house, as he was assured by the number of footmen that he saw in the hall, that many visitants were there before him : — this unexpected piece of good fortune, as he then thought it, especially as he found her playing with the squirrel he had sent to her the day before, so much elated him, that it brightened his whole aspect, and gave a double share of vivacity to his eyes, “ May I hope your pardon, madam,” said he, “ for presuming to approach you with so trifling a present, as that little creature ? ” — “ Oh, Mr. H 2 “ Truworth ! ”

“ Trueworth !” answered she, “ I will not forgive you if you speak slightly of my squirrel, though I am indebted to you for the pleasure he gives me.—— I love him excessively ! ——you could not have made me a more obliging present.”

“ How, madam !” cried he, “ I should be miserable, indeed, if I had nothing in my power to offer more worthy your acceptance than that animal.—What think you, madam, of an adoring and passionately devoted heart ?

“ A heart !” rejoined she, “ Oh dear, a heart may be a pretty thing for ought I know to the contrary ; but there is such an enclosure of flesh and bone about it, that it is utterly impossible for one to see into it, and consequently to know whether one likes it or not.”

“ The heart, madam, in the sense I mean,” said he, “ implies the soul, which being a spirit and invisible, can only be known by its effects : ——if the whole services of mine may render it on oblation, such as may obtain a gracious reception from the adorable Miss Thoughtless, I shall bless the hour in which I first beheld her charms, as the most fortunate one I ever had to boast of.” In ending these words he kissed her hand, with a look full of the greatest respect and tenderness.

She then told him, the services of the soul must needs be valuable, because they were sincere ; but as she knew not of what nature those services were he intended to render her, he must excuse her for not so readily accepting them : —— on which, it is not to be doubted, but that he assured her, they should be only such as were dictated by the most pure affection, and accompanied by the strictest honour.

He

He was going on with such protestations as may be imagined a man so much enamoured would make to the object of his wishes, when he was interrupted by Miss Flora, who came hastily into the room, and told him, that her mamma hearing that he was in the house, expected he would not leave it without letting her have the pleasure of seeing him : — that they were just going to tea, and that her ladyship intreated he would join company with those friends she had already with her.

Mr. Truworth would have been glad to have found some plausible pretence for not complying with this invitation, but as he could not make any, that would not be looked on as favouring of ill manners, and Miss Betsy insisting on his going, they all went together into the dining-room.

The lover had now no farther opportunity of prosecuting his suit in this visit ; but he made another the next day, more early than before, and found no-body but Mr. Goodman with Miss Betsy, Lady Mellasin and Miss Flora being gone among the shops, either to buy something they wanted, or to tumble over goods, as they frequently did, merely for the sake of seeing new fashions. — Mr. Truworth having never been seen by Mr. Goodman, Miss Betsy presented him to him with these words, “ Sir, this is a gentleman from Oxford, — an “ intimate friend of brother Frank’s, and who did “ me the favour to bring me a letter from him.” There needed no more to make Mr. Goodman know, both who he was and the business on which he came : — he received him with a great deal of good manners ; but knowing his absence would be most agreeable, after some few compliments, pretended he was called abroad by urgent business, and took his leave.

How much it rejoiced the sincerely devoted heart of Mr. Truworth, to find himself once more alone with the idol of his wishes, may easily be conceived by those who have had any experience of the passion he so deeply felt ; — but his felicity was of a short continuance, and he profited but little by the complaisance of Mr. Goodman.

He was but just beginning to pour forth some part of those tender sentiments, with which his soul overflowed, when he was prevented from proceeding, by a second interruption, much more disagreeable than the former had been.

Mr. Staple, and captain Hyfom, for whom Miss Betsy had not left the same orders she had done the day before, came both to visit her : the former had the advantage in being there somewhat sooner than the other, and accosted her with an air, which made the enamoured heart of Mr. Truworth immediately beat an alarm to jealousy. Mr. Staple, who had seen him there once before, when he brought her brother's letter to her, did not presently know him for his rival, nor imagined he had any other intent in his visits, than to pay his compliments to the sister of his friend.

They were all three engaged in a conversation, which had nothing particular in it, when Miss Betsy was told captain Hyfom desired to speak with her ; on which she bid the fellow desire him to walk in. “ He is in the back parlour, madam,” replied he ; “ I told him you had company, so he desires “ you will come to him there ; for he says he has “ great business with you, and must needs speak “ with you.” Both Miss Betsy and Mr. Staple laughed immoderately at this message ; but Mr. Truworth, who was not in the secret, looked a little grave, as not knowing what to think of it. “ You would scarce believe, Sir,” said Mr. Staple to him, “ that this embassy came from the court

“ of Cupid, yet I assure you the captain is one of
 “ this lady’s most passionate admirers.”——“ Yes,
 “ indeed,” added Miss Betsy, “ and threatens ter-
 “ rible things to every one, who should dare to
 “ dispute the conquest of my heart with him ;——
 “ but go,!” continued she, to the footman, “ tell
 “ him, I have friends with me whom I cannot be
 “ so rude to leave, and that I insist on his giving us
 “ his company in this room.”

The captain on this was prevailed upon to come
 in, though not very well pleased at finding him-
 self obliged to do so, by the positive commands of
 his mistress.——He paid his respects, however, in
 his blunt manner to the gentlemen, as well as Miss
 Betsy, and having drawn his chair as near her as he
 could, “ I hoped, madam,” said he, “ you would
 “ have found an opportunity of speaking to me
 “ before now :—you must needs think I am a little
 “ uneasy till I know what I have to depend upon.”
 ——“ Bless me, Sir,” cried she, “ you talk in an
 “ odd manner !”——and then, continued she, point-
 ing to Mr. Truworth, “ this gentleman here, who
 “ is a friend of my brother’s, will think I have
 “ out-run my income, and that you come to dun
 “ me for money borrowed of you.”——“ No, no,”
 answered he, “ as to that you owe me nothing but
 “ good-will,—and that I think I deserve for the
 “ respect I have for you, if it were for nothing
 “ else ; but, madam, I should be glad to know
 “ some answer to the business I wrote to you up-
 “ on.”——Lord, Sir !” replied she, “ I have not
 “ yet had time to think upon it,—much less to
 “ resolve on any thing.”——“ That is strange,” re-
 sumed he, “ why you have had three days, and sure
 “ that is long enough to think, and resolve too, on
 “ any thing.”——“ Not for me indeed, captain, an-
 “ swered she, laughing ;—but come, here are just

“ four of us,—what think you, gentlemen, of a
 “ game of quadrille to kill time ?”

Mr. Truworth and Mr. Staple told her at once, that they approved the motion, and she was just going to call for the cards and fishes, when the captain stopped her, saying, “ I never loved play in
 “ my life, and have no time to kill as mayhap these
 “ gentlemen have, who, ’tis likely have nothing
 “ else to do than to dress and visit ;—I have a
 “ great deal of business upon my hands,—the ship
 “ is taking in her lading, and I do not know but
 “ we may sail in six or seven weeks, so must de-
 “ sire you would fix a day for us to be alone to-
 “ gether, that I may know at once what it is you
 “ design to do.”——“ Fye, captain !” replied she, “ how can you think of such a thing ?—I as-
 “ sure you, Sir,” added she, with an affected dis-
 “ dain, “ I never make appointments with gentle-
 “ men.”

“ That I believe,” said he, “ but you should
 “ consider that I live a great way off ;—’tis a long
 “ walk from Mile end to St. James’s, and I hate
 “ your jolting hackney-coaches ;—besides I may
 “ come and come again, and never be able to get
 “ a word with you in private, in an afternoon, and
 “ all the morning I am engaged either at the In-
 “ dia house, or at ’Change ;—therefore I should
 “ think it is better for both of us not to stand shilly,
 “ shally ; but come to the point at once ; for
 “ lookye, fair lady, if we happen to agree, there
 “ will be little enough time to settle every thing,
 “ as I am obliged to go so soon.”——“ Too little in
 “ my opinion, Sir,” answered she, “ therefore
 “ I think it is best to defer talking any more of the
 “ matter, ’till you come back.”

“ Come back,” cried he, “ why do you confi-
 “ der I shall be gone three years.”——“ Really,
 “ Sir,” said she, “ as I told you before I have ne-

“ ver considered any thing about it, nor can promise I should be able to say any more to you at the end of twice the time you mention, than I can do at present, which I assure you is just nothing at all.”

Though both Mr. Truworth, and Mr. Staple, had too much good manners to do any thing that might affront the captain, yet neither of them could restrain their laughter so well as to prevent some marks of the inclination they had for it, from being visible in their faces;——and willing to contribute something on their parts to the diversion they perceived she gave herself, with a lover so every way unsuitable to her,——one told her, it was a great pity she did not consult the captain’s convenience;——the other said, that it must needs be a vast fatigue for a gentleman, who was accustomed only to walk the quarter deck, to take a stretch of four miles at once’——“ And all to no purpose,” cried he, that had spoken first, “ pray, madam, give him his dispatch.”

As little acquainted as the captain was with railery, he had understanding enough to make him see, that Miss Betsy’s behaviour to him had rendered him the jest of all the company that visited her, and this he took so ill, that all the liking he before had to her was now turned into contempt.——Finding they were going on in the ironical way they had began,——“ Lookye, gentlemen,” said he, with a pretty stern countenance, “ I would advise you “ to meddle only with such things as concern yourselves ;——you have nothing to do with me, “ nor I with you.——If your errand here be as “ I suspect it is, there sits one who I dare answer “ will find you employment enough, as long as you “ shall think it worth your while to dance attendance. As for you, Madam,” continued he, turning to Miss Betsy, “ I think it would have been “ come you as well, to have given me a more civil

“ answer,——if you did not approve of my pro-
 “ posals, you might have told me so at first ;——
 “ but I shall trouble neither you nor myself any
 “ farther about the matter.——I see how it is
 “ well enough, and when next I steer for the coast
 “ of matrimony, shall take care to look out for a
 “ port not cumbered with rubbish ;——so your
 “ servant.”

As he was going out of the house, he met lady Mellasin and Miss Flora just entering, being returned from the ramble above-mentioned :——they saw he was very angry, and would fain have persuaded him to turn back, telling him, that if any misunderstanding had happened between him and Miss Betsey, they would endeavour to make it up, and reconcile them.——To which he replied, that he thanked them for their love, but he had done with Miss Betsey for good and all ;——that she was no better than a young flirt, and did not know how to use a gentleman handsomely ;——said, he should be glad to take a bowl of punch with Mr. Goodman before he went on his voyage ; but would not come any more to his house to be scoffed at by Miss Betsey, and those that came after her.

Miss Flora told him, that it was unjust in him to deprive her mamma, and herself, of the pleasure of his good company for the fault of Miss Betsey, who, she said, she could not help owning was of a very giddy temper.——Lady Mellasin, to what her daughter had said, added many obliging things, in order to prevail on him, either to return, or renew his visits hereafter ; but the captain was obstinate, and persisting in his resolution of coming there no more, took his leave, and Miss Flora lost all hope of receiving any benefit from his being rejected by Miss Betsey.

C H A P. XIX.

Will make the reader little the wiser.

THE greatest part of the time, that Mr. Trueworth and Mr. Staple stayed with Miss Betsy, was taken up with talking of captain Hyfom;—his passion,—his behaviour, and the manner in which he received his dismissal, afforded indeed an ample field for conversation :———lady Mellasin, and Miss Flora relating the answers he had given them, on their pressing him to come back, Mr. Trueworth said, that it must be owned, that he had shewn a strength of resolution, which few men in love could boast of.

“ Love, Sir, according to my notions of that passion,” replied Mr. Staple, “ is not to be felt by every heart ;———many deceive themselves in this point, and take for it what is in reality no more than a bare liking of a beautiful object :———the captain seems to me to have a soul, as well as form, cast in too rough a mould, to be capable of those refined and delicate ideas, which alone constitute and are worthy to be called love.”

“ Yet,” said lady Mellasin, “ I have heard Mr. Goodman give him an excellent character, and above all that he is one of the best-natured men breathing.”———“ That may be indeed,” madam,” resumed Mr. Staple, “ and some allowances ought to be made for the manner in which he has been bred ; though,” added he, “ I have known many commanders, not only of Indiamen, but of other trading vessels, who have all their life time used the seas, yet have known
“ how

“ how to behave with politeness enough when on shore.”

Mr. Truworth agreed with Mr. Staple, that though the amorous declaration of a person of the captain's age, and fashion of bringing up, to one of Miss Betsey's, exposed him to the deserved ridicule of as many as knew it ; yet ought not his particular foible to be any reflection on his occupation, which merited to be held in the greatest veneration, as the strength and opulence of the nation was owing to its commerce in foreign parts.

This was highly obliging to Mr. Staple, whose father had been a merchant, and Mr. Truworth being the first who took his leave, perceiving the other stayed supper, he said abundance of handsome things in his praise, and seemed to have conceived so high an esteem of him, that Miss Betsey was diverted in her mind to think how he would change his way of speaking, when once the secret of his rivalry should come out, as she knew it could not fail to do in a short time.

But as easy as Mr. Staple was at present, on this occasion, Mr. Truworth was no less anxious and perplexed :——he was convinced that the other visited Miss Betsey on no other score than that of love, and it appeared to him equally certain, by the freedom with which he saw him treated in the family, that he was likewise greatly encouraged, if not by Miss Betsey herself, at least by her guardian.

His thoughts were now wholly taken up with the means, by which he might gain the advantage over a rival, whom he looked upon as a formidable one, not only for his personal accomplishments, but also for his having the good fortune to address her before himself.——All he could do was to prevent, as much as possible, all opportunities of his entertaining Miss Betsey in private, till the arrival of Mr. Francis Thoughtless, from whose friendship,
and

and the influence he had over his sister, he hoped much.

He waited on her the next day very early:—Mr. Goodman happening to dine that day later than ordinary, on account of some friends he had with him, and the cloth not being drawn, Miss Betsy went and received him in another room.—Having this favourable opportunity, he immediately began to prepare for putting into execution one of those stratagems he had contrived for separating her from Mr. Staple. After some few tender speeches, he fell into a discourse concerning the weather; said, he was sorry to perceive the days so much shortned,—that summer would soon be gone; and added, that as that beautiful season could last but a small time, the most should be made of it:—“I came,” said he, “to entreat the favour of you, and Miss Flora, to permit me to accompany you in an airing through Brumpton, Kensington, Chelsea, and the other little villages on this side of London.”

Miss Betsy replied, that she would go with all her heart, and believed she could answer the same for Miss Flora, there being only two grave Dons, and their wives within, whom she would be glad to be disengaged from;—“but if not,” said she, “I can send for a young lady in the neighbourhood, who will be glad to give us her company.”

She sent first, however, to Miss Flora, who immediately came in, and the proposal being made, accepted it with pleasure, and added, that she would ask her mamma for orders for the coach to be got ready.—“It needs not, madam,” said Mr. Trueworth, “my servant is here, and he shall get one from Blunt’s;”—but Miss Flora insisted on their going in Mr. Goodman’s, saying, she was certain neither he nor her mamma would go out that

that day, as the company they had were come to stay ; on which Mr. Truworth complied.

When she had left the room, “ Ah ! madam,” said he to Miss Betsy, “ could I flatter myself with believing I owed this condescension to any other motive than your complaisance, to a person who has some share in your brother’s friendship, I should be blest indeed ;——but, ah ! I see I have a rival,——a rival dangerous to my hopes, not only on the account of his merits, but also as he had the honour of declaring his passion before me :——the fortunate Mr. Staple,” added he, kissing her hand, “ may perhaps have already made some impression on that heart I would sacrifice my all to gain, and I am come too late.”

“ Rather too soon,” replied she, smiling ;——“ both of you equally too soon, admitting his sentiments for me be as you imagine ; for I assure you, Sir, my heart has hitherto been entirely my own, and is not very likely to incline to the reception of any guest of the nature you mean, for yet a long, —— long time. —— Whoever thinks to gain me must not be in a hurry, like captain Hyfom.”

Mr. Truworth was about to make some passionate reply, when Miss Flora returned, and told them the coach would be ready immediately, for she herself had spoke to the coachman, and bid him put the horses to with all the haste he could ; on which the lover expressed his sense of the obligation he had to her for taking this trouble, in the politest terms.

A person of much less discernment than this gentleman might easily perceive, that the way to be agreeable to Miss Betsy was not to be too serious ;——he therefore assumed all the vivacity he was master of, both before they went, and during the whole course of the little tour they made, in which

it is not to be doubted but he regaled them with every thing the places they passed through could furnish.

The ladies were so well pleased both with their entertainment, and the company of the person who entertained them, that they seemed not in haste to go home, and he had the double satisfaction of enjoying the presence of his mistress, and of giving at least one day's disappointment to his rival:—he was confirmed in the truth of this conjecture, when, on returning to Mr. Goodman's, which was not till some hours after close of day, the footman who opened the door told Miss Betsy, that Mr. Staple had been to wait upon her.

After this it may be supposed he had a night of much more tranquillity, than the preceding one had afforded him:—the next morning, as early as he thought decency permitted, he made a visit to Miss Betsy, under the pretence of coming to enquire if her health had not suffered by being abroad in the night air, and how she had rested:—she received him with a great deal of sprightliness, and replied, she found herself so well after it, as to be ready for such another jaunt, whenever he had a fancy for it. “I take you at your word, madam,” cried he, transported to hear she anticipated what he came on purpose to entreat,—“I am ready this moment “if you please,” continued he, “and we will “either take a barge, and go up the river, or a “coach to Hampstead, or any of those places, just “to diversify the scene;—you have only to say “which you chuse.”

She then told him, there was a necessity of deferring their ramble 'till the afternoon, because Miss Flora was abroad, and would not return till dinner-time.—“As to what route we shall take, and every thing belonging to it,” said she, “I leave “it entirely to you;—I know nobody has a
“more

“ more elegant taste, or a better judgment.”——
 “ I have taken care,” replied he, “ to give the
 “ world an high opinion of me in both, by mak-
 “ ing my addressees to the amiable Miss Betsy ;——
 “ but madam,” pursued he, “ since we are alone,
 “ will you give me leave to tell you how I have
 “ employed my hours this morning.”——“ Why,
 “ ——in dressing——breakfasting,——and, per-
 “ haps, a little reading,” answered she.——“ A
 “ small time, madam, suffices for the two former
 “ articles with me,” resumed he, but I have indeed
 “ been reading ;——happening to dip into the
 “ works of a poet, who wrote near a century ago,
 “ I found some words so adapted to the situation
 “ of my heart, and so agreeable to the sense of the
 “ answer I was about to make yesterday to what
 “ you said, concerning the perseverance of a lover,
 “ that I could not forbear putting some notes to
 “ them, which I beg you will give me your opi-
 “ nion of.”

In speaking these words, he took a piece of paper out of his pocket, and sung the following stanzas.

I.

“ **T** H E Patriarch, to gain a wife
 “ Chaste, beautiful, and young,
 “ Serv'd fourteen years, a painful life,
 “ And never thought it long.

II.

“ Oh ! were you to reward such cares,
 “ And life so long would stay,
 “ Not fourteen, but four hundred years,
 “ Would seem but as one day.”

Mr. Truworth had a fine voice, and great skill in music; having perfected himself in that science from the best masters, when he was in Italy. Miss Betsy was so charmed both with the words and the notes,

notes, that she made him sing them several times over, and afterwards set them down in her music-book, to the end that she might get them by heart, and join her voice in concert with her spinet.

Mr. Truworth would not make his morning visit too long, believing it might be her time to dress against dinner, as she was now in such a deshabille as ladies usually put on, on their first rising ; —so after having received a second promise from her of giving him her company that day abroad, took his leave, highly satisfied with the progress he imagined he had made in her good graces.

The wind happening to grow a little boisterous, though the weather otherwise was fair and clear, made Mr. Truworth think a land journey would be more agreeable to the ladies, than to venture themselves upon the water ; he therefore procured a handsome livery coach, and attended by his two servants, went to Mr. Goodman's : —the ladies were already in expectation of him, and did not make him wait a moment.

Nothing extraordinary happening at this entertainment, nor at those others, which, for several succeeding days without intermission Mr. Truworth prevailed on his mistress to accept, it would be superfluous to trouble the reader with the particulars of them.

Mr. Staple all this time was very uneasy ; — he had not seen Miss Betsy for a whole Week, and though he knew not as yet, that he was deprived of that satisfaction, by her being engrossed by a rival, yet he now began to be sensible she had less regard for him, than he had flattered himself he had inspired her with ; and this of itself was a sufficient mortification to a young gentleman, who was not only passionately in love, but also could not, without being guilty of great injustice to his own merits, but think himself not altogether unworthy of succeeding.

succeeding.—This however was no more than a slight sample of the inquietudes which the blind god sometimes inflicts on hearts devoted to him, as will hereafter appear in the progress of this history.

CHAP. XX.

Contains an odd accident, which happened to Miss Betsy in the cloisters of Westminster-abbey.

MR. Truworth, who was yet far from being acquainted with the temper of the object he adored, now thought he had no reason to despair of being one day in possession of all he aimed to obtain ;——it seemed certain to him, at least, that he had nothing to apprehend from the pretensions of a rival, who at first he had looked upon as so formidable, and no other at present interpolated between him and his designs.

Miss Betsy, in the mean time, wholly regardless of who hoped, or who despaired, had no aim in any thing she did, but merely to divert herself, and to that end laid hold of every opportunity that offered. Mr. Goodman having casually mentioned, as they were at supper, that one Mr. Soulguard had just taken orders, and was to preach his first sermon at Westminster-abbey the next day, she presently had a curiosity of hearing how he would behave in the pulpit ;——his over modest, and, as they termed it, sheepish behaviour in company, having, as often as he came there, afforded matter of ridicule to her and Miss Flora.—These two young ladies therefore talking on it after they were in bed, agreed to go to the cathedral, not doubting but they should have enough to laugh at, and re-
port

port to all those of their acquaintance who had ever seen him.

What meer trifles,—what airy nothings serve to amuse a mind not taken up with more essential matters?—Miss Betsy was so full of the diversion she should have in hearing the down-looked bashful Mr. Soulguard harangue his congregation, that she could think and talk of nothing else, till the hour arrived when she should go to experience what she had so pleasant an idea of.

Miss Flora, who had till now seemed as eager as herself, cried all at once, that her head ached, and that she did not care for stirring out:—Miss Betsy, who would fain have laughed her out of it, told her, she had only got the vapours,—that the parson would cure her,—and such like things—but the other was not to be prevailed upon by, all Miss Betsy, or even lady Mellasin herself, could say, and answered, with some sullenness, that positively she would not go.—Miss Betsy was highly ruffled at this sudden turn of her temper, as it was now too late to send for any other young lady of her acquaintance to go with her;—resolving, nevertheless, not to baulk her humour, she ordered a chair to be called, and went alone.

Neither the young parson's manner of preaching, nor the text he chose, being any way material to this history, I shall therefore pass over the time of divine service, and only say, that after it was ended, Miss Betsy passing towards the west-gate, and stopping to look on the fine tomb, erected to the memory of Mr. secretary Craggs, was accosted by Mr Bloomacre, a young gentleman who sometimes visited lady Mellasin, and lived at Westminster, in which place he had a large estate.

He had with him, when he came up to her, two gentlemen of his acquaintance, but who were entire strangers to Miss Betsy:—"What," said he,
"the

“ the celebrated Miss Betfy Thoughtless !——
 “ Miss Betfy Thoughtless ! the idol of mankind !
 “ alone, unattended by any of her train of admir-
 “ ers, and contemplating these memento’s of mor-
 “ tality !”——“ To compliment my understanding,”
 replied she, gaily, “ you should rather have told
 “ me I was contemplating the memento’s of great
 “ actions.”——“ You are at the wrong end of the
 “ cathedral for that, madam,” resumed he, “ and
 “ I don’t remember to have heard any thing ex-
 “ traordinary of the life of this great man, whose
 “ effigy makes so fine a figure here, except the
 “ favours he received from the ladies.”

“ ’Twere too much then to bestow them on
 “ him both alive and dead,” cried she, “ therefore
 “ we’ll pass on to some other.”

Mr. Bloomacre had a great deal of wit and vivacity, nor were his two companions deficient in either of these qualities ; so that between the three Miss Betfy was very agreeably entertained :—— they went round from tomb and tomb, and the real characters, as well as epitaphs, some of which are flattering enough, afforded a variety of observations. —— In fine, the conversation was so pleasing to Miss Betfy, that she never thought of going home, ’till it grew too dark to examine either the sculpture, or the inscriptions ; so insensibly does time glide on, when accompanied with satisfaction.

But now ensued a mortification, which struck a damp on the sprightliness of this young lady :—— she had sent away the chair which brought her, not doubting but there would be others about the church doors. She knew not how difficult it was to procure such a vehicle in Westminster, especially on a Sunday ;——to add to her vexation, it rained very much, and she was not in a habit fit to travel on foot in any weather, much less in such as this.

They

They went down into the cloisters, in order to find some person whom they might send, either for a coach or chair, for the gentlemen would have been glad of such conveniencies for themselves, as well as Miss Betsey :—they walked round and round several times, without hearing or seeing any body ;—but at last a fellow, who used to be employed in sweeping the church doors, offered his service to procure them what they wanted, in case there was a possibility of doing it ;—they promised to gratify him well for his pains, and he ran with all the speed he could to do as he had said.

The rain and wind increased to such a prodigious height, that scarce was ever a more tempestuous evening.—Almost a whole hour was elapsed, and the man not come back, so that they had reason to fear neither coach nor chair was to be got.—Miss Betsey began to grow extremely impatient ;—the gentlemen endeavoured all they could to keep her in good humour,—“ We have a good stone
“ roof over our heads, madam,” said one of them,
“ and that at present shelters us from the inclemency of the elements ;”—besides,” cried another, “ the storm cannot last always,—and when
“ it is a little abated,—here are three of us,—we
“ will take you in our arms by turns, and carry
“ you home.”—All this would not make Miss Betsey laugh, and she was in the utmost agitation of mind to think what she should do, when, on a sudden, a door in that part of the cloister which leads to Little Dean’s Yard was opened, and a very young lady, not exceeding eleven years of age, but very richly habited, came running out, and taking Miss Betsey by the sleeve, “ Madam,” said she,
“ I beg to speak with you.”—Miss Betsey was surprised, but stepping some paces from the gentlemen to hear what she had to say, the other drawing towards the door, cried, “ Please, madam, to come
“ in

“ in here ;” on which she followed, and the gentlemen stood about some four or five yards distant.—Miss Betsey had no sooner reached the threshold, which had a step down into the hall, than the young lady took hold of her hand, and pulling her gently down, as if to communicate what she had to say with the more privacy, a footman, who stood behind the door, immediately clapped it to, and put the chain across, as if he apprehended some violence might be offered to it.—Miss Betsey was in so much consternation, that she was unable to speak one word, ’till the young lady, who still had hold of her hand, said to her, “ You may thank heaven, madam, that our family happened to be in town,—else I do not know what mischief might have befallen you,”——Bless me,” cried Miss Betsey, and was going on, but the other interrupted her, saying, hastily, as she led her forward, “ Walk this way,—my brother will tell you all.”——Miss Betsey then stopped short, “ What means all this ? said she : where am I, pray, “ Miss, who is your brother ?” To which the other replied, that her brother was the lord viscount—, and that he at present was the owner of that house.

The surprize Miss Betsey had been put in by this young lady’s first accosting her, was not at all dissipated by these words, but had now an equal portion of curiosity added to it ;—she longed to know the meaning of words, which at present seemed so mysterious to her, and with what kind of mischief she had been threatened, that she readily accompanied her young conductress into a magnificent parlour, at the upper end of which sat the nobleman she had been told of,—“ I am extremely happy,” said he, as soon as he saw her enter, “ that providence has put it in my power to rescue “ so fine a lady from the villainy contrived against “ her.”

Miss Betsy replied, that she should always be thankful for any favours conferred upon her, but desired to know of what nature they were, for which she was indebted to his lordship :—— he then told her, that the persons she had been with had the most base designs upon her ;—— that he had heard, from a closet window where he was sitting, two of them lay the plot for carrying her off in a hackney-coach ; and added, that being struck with horror at the foul intention, he had contrived, by the means of his sister, to get her out of their power ; ——“ For,” said he, “ I know one of them to be so bloody a villain, that had I gone out myself, I must have fallen a sacrifice to their resentment.”

Miss Betsy was quite confounded ; she knew not how to question the veracity of a nobleman, who could have no view or interest to deceive her, yet it was equally incongruous to her, that Mr. Bloomacre could harbour any designs upon her of that sort his lordship mentioned :---she had several times been in company with that gentleman, and he had never behaved towards her in a manner which could give her room to suspect he had any dishonourable intentions towards her ;—— but then, the treatment she had received from the gentleman-commoner at Oxford reminded her, that men of an amorous complexion want only an opportunity to shew those inclinations which indolence, or perhaps indelicacy, prevents them from attempting to gratify by assiduities, and courtship.

After having taken some little time to consider what she should say, she replied, that she was infinitely obliged to his lordship for the care he took of her, but might be very well amazed to hear those gentlemen had any ill designs upon her, two of whom were perfect strangers to her, and the other often visited at the house where she was boarded.

As for the sending for a coach, she said it was by her own desire, if no chair could be procured; and added, that if his lordship had no other reason to apprehend any ill was meant to her, she could not, without injustice, forbear to clear up the mistake.

Lord ——— was a little confounded at these words, but soon recovering himself, told her, that she knew not the real character of the persons she had been with; ——— that Bloomacre was one of the greatest libertines in the world; ——— that though she might agree to have a coach sent for, she could not be sure to what place it might carry her, and that he heard two of them, while the third was entertaining her, speak to each other in a manner which convinced him the most villainous contrivance was about to be practised on her.

A loud knocking at the door now interrupted their discourse; ——— both his lordship and his sister seemed terribly alarmed, ——— all the servants were called, and charge given not to open the door upon any account, ——— to bar up the lower windows, and to give answers from those above, to whoever was there. ——— The knocking continued with greater violence than it began, and Miss Betsy heard the gentlemen's voices talking to the servants, and though she could not distinguish what they said, found there were very high words between them. ——— My lord's sister ran into the hall to listen, then came back, crying, "O what terrible oaths!" "—— I am afraid they will break open the door." "—— No," replied lord ———, "it is too strong for that; ——— but I wish we had been so wise as to send for a constable." ——— One of the servants came down, and repeated what their young lady had said; adding, that the gentlemen swore they would not leave the place, till they had spoke with the lady, who they said had been trepanned into that

that house: — on this, “ Suppose, my lord,” said Miss Betsy, “ I go to the door, and tell them, “ that I will not go with them.” — “ No, madam,” answered lord——, “ I cannot consent my door shall be opened to such ruffians ; for, besides that they would certainly seize, and carry you off by force, I know not what mischief they might do my poor men, for having at first refused them entrance.” — She then said, she would go up to the window, and answer them from thence ; but he would not suffer her to be seen by them at all, and to keep her from insisting on it, told her a great many stories of rapes, and other mischiefs had been perpetrated by Bloomacre, and those he kept company with.

All this did not give Miss Betsy those terrors, which it is very plain his lordship and sister endeavoured to inspire her with, yet would she say no more of appearing to the gentlemen, as she found he was so averse to it.

At length the knocking ceased, and one of the footmen came down, and said, that those who had given his lordship this disturbance had withdrawn from the door, and he believed were gone quite out of the cloisters ; — but this intelligence did not satisfy lord—— ; he either was, or pretended to be, in fear, that they were still skulking in some corner, and would rush in if they once saw the door opened. — There was still the same difficulty as ever, how Miss Betsy should get home ; — that is, how she should get safely out of the house, for the rain being over, the servants said they did not doubt but they should be able to procure a chair or coach : — after much debating on this matter, it was thus contrived.

L—— had a window that looked into the yard of one of the prebendary’s, — a footman was to go out of this window to the back door of that re-

verend divine, relate the whole story, and beg leave to go through his house :—this request being granted, the footman went, and returned in less than half an-hour, with the welcome news, that a chair was ready, and waited in College-street.—Miss Betsey had no way of passing, but by the same the footman had done, which she easily did, by being lifted by my lord into the window, and descending from it by the help of some steps, placed on the other side by the servants of the prebendary.

It would be superfluous to trouble the reader with any speeches made by lord ——— and his sister to Miss Betsey, or the replies she made to them ; I shall only say, that passing through this house, and the college-garden, at the door of which the chair attended, she went into it, preceded by lord ———'s footman, muffled up in a cloak, and without a flambeau, to prevent being known, in case she should be met by Bloomacre, or either of his companions ; and with this equipage she arrived safely at home, though not without a mind strangely perplexed at the meaning of this adventure.

C H A P. XXI.

Gives an explanation of the former, with other particulars, more agreeable to the reader in the repetition, than to the persons concerned in them.

IT was near ten o'clock when Miss Betsey came home, and Mr. Goodman, who had been very uneasy at her staying out so late, especially as she was alone, was equally rejoiced at her return ; but, as well as lady Mellasin, was surprized on hearing by what accident she had been detained :—they knew not how to judge of it,—there was no circumstance

cumstance in the whole affair, which could make them think Mr. Bloomacre had any designs of that sort lord——had suggested ; yet did Mr. Goodman think himself obliged, as the young lady's guardian, to go to that gentleman, and have some talk with him concerning what had passed.—Accordingly he went the next morning to his house, but not finding him at home, left word with his servant, that he desired to speak with him as soon as possible :—he came not, however, the whole day, nor sent any message to excuse his not doing so, and this neglect gave Mr. Goodman, and Miss Betsy herself, some room to suspect, he was no less guilty than he had been represented, since had he been perfectly innocent, it seemed reasonable to them, to think he would have come, even of his own accord, to have learned of Miss Betsy the motive of her leaving him in so abrupt and odd a manner ; — but how much they wronged him will presently appear, and they were afterwards convinced.

There was an implacable animosity between lord —— and Mr. Bloomacre, on account of the former's pretending a right to some lands which the other held, and could not be dispossessed of by law.—As his lordship knew Mr. Bloomacre was not of a disposition to bear an affront tamely, he had no other way to vent his spleen against him, than by villifying and traducing him in all companies he came into ; but this he took care to do in so artful a manner as to be enabled, either to evade or render what he said impossible to be proved, in case he were called to an account for it.

The affair of Miss Betsy, innocent as it was, he thought gave him an excellent opportunity of gratifying his malice ;—he went early the next morning to the dean, complained of an insult offered to his house by Mr. Bloomacre, on the score of his

sister having brought in a young lady, whom that gentleman had detained in the cloisters, and was going to carry off, by the assistance of some friends he had with him, in a hackney coach.

The dean, who was also a bishop, was extremely incensed, as well he might, at so glaring a proph-
 ——— had taken his leave, sent for Mr. Bloom-
 acre to come to him,—That gentleman immedi-
 ately obeying the summons, the bishop began to
 reprimand him in terms, which the occasion seem-
 ed to require from a person of his function and au-
 thority :—Mr. Bloomacre could not forbear inter-
 rupting him, though with the greatest respect, say-
 ing nothing could be more false and base, than such
 an accusation;—that whoever had given such an
 information was a villain, and merited to be used
 as such.—The Prelate seeing him in this heat, would
 not mention the name of his accuser ; but replied
 coolly, that it was possible he might be wronged,
 but to convince him that he was so, he must re-
 late to him the whole truth of the story, and on
 what grounds a conjecture so much to the disad-
 vantage of his reputation had been formed :—on
 which Mr. Bloomacre repeated every thing that
 had passed ; and added, that he was well acquainted
 with the family where the young lady was boarded,
 and that he was certain she would appear in person
 to justify him in this point, if his lordship thought
 it proper ;—“ but,” said the bishop, “ I hear you
 “ affronted the lord ———, by thundering at his
 “ door, and abusing his servants.”—“ No, my
 “ lord,” answered Mr. Bloomacre, “ lord ———,
 “ though far from being my friend, will not dare
 “ to alledge any such thing against me.—We were
 “ indeed a little surprized to see the young lady,
 “ who was with us, snatched away in so odd a
 “ fashion by his sister, who we easily perceived
 “ had

"had not the least acquaintance with her.—We
"continued walking, however, in the cloister,
"till the man whom we had sent for a coach re-
"turned, and told us, he had got one, and that
"it waited at the gate.—We then, indeed, knock-
"ed at lord ———'s door, and being answered
"from the windows by the servants, in a very
"impertinent manner, I believe we might utter
"some words not very respectful, either of his
"lordship or his sister, whose behaviour in this
"affair I am as yet intirely ignorant how to ac-
"count for."

The bishop paused a considerable time, but on Mr. Bloomacre's repeating what he had said before, concerning bringing the lady herself to avouch the truth of what he had related to his lordship, replied, that there was no occasion for troubling either her or himself any farther;—that he believed there had been some mistake in the business, and that he should think no more of it; on which Mr. Bloomacre took his leave.

Though the bishop had not mentioned the name of lord ——— to Mr. Bloomacre, as the person who had brought this complaint against him, yet he was very certain, by all circumstances, that he could be indebted to no other for such a piece of low malice; and this, joined to some other provocations he had received from the ill-will of that nobleman, made him resolve to do himself justice.

He went directly from the deanery in search of the two gentlemen, who had been with him in the abbey when he happened to meet Miss Betsy, and having found them both, they went to a tavern together, in order to consult on what was proper to be done, for the chastisement of lord ———'s folly and ill-nature.

Both of them agreed with Mr. Bloomacre, that he ought to demand that satisfaction, which every gentleman has a right to expect from any one who has injured him, of what degree soever he be, excepting those of royal blood.—Each of them was so eager to be his second in this affair, that they were obliged to draw lots for the determination of the choice ;—he who had the ill-luck, as he called it, to draw the shortest cut, would needs oblige them to let him be the bearer of the challenge, that he might at least have some share in inflicting the punishment, which the behaviour of that unworthy lord so justly merited.

The challenge was wrote,—the place appointed for meeting was the field behind Montague house ; but the gentleman who carried it brought no answer back,—his lordship telling him only that he would consider on the matter, and let Mr. Bloomacre know his intentions.

Mr. Bloomacre as the principal, and the other as his second, were so enraged at this, that the latter resolved to go himself, and force a more categorical answer.—He did so, and lord ——— having had time to consult his brother, and, as it is said, some other friends, told him, he accepted the challenge, and would be ready with his second at the time and place appointed in it.

Mr. Bloomacre did not go home that whole day, therefore knew nothing of the message had been left for him by Mr. Goodman, till it was too late to comply with it ; but this seeming remissness in him, was not all that troubled the mind of that open and honest-hearted guardian of Miss Betsy.—Mr. Truworth and Mr. Staple had both been at his house the day before :—the former on hearing his mistress was abroad, left only his compliments, and went away, though very much pressed to come in by Miss Flora, who seeing him through the parlour—

parlour-window, ran to the door herself, and intreated he would pass the evening there ;--- Mr. Staple came the moment after, and met his rival coming down the steps that led up to the door ;--- Mr. Truworth saluted him in passing with the usual complaisance, which the other returned in a very cool manner, and knocked hastily at the door, " I imagine," said he to the footman who opened it, " that Miss Betsy is not at home, by that gentleman's having so early taken leave ; but I would speak with Mr. Goodman if he be at leisure."

He was then shewed into the back parlour, which was the room where Mr. Goodman generally received those persons who came to him upon business ;---on hearing who it was that asked for him, he was a little surprised, and desired he would walk up stairs ; but Mr. Staple not knowing but there might be company above, returned for answer, that he had no more than a word or two to say to him, and that must be in private ; on which the other immediately came down to him.

This young lover having by accident been informed, not only that Mr. Truworth made his addresses to Miss Betsy, but also that it was with him she had been engaged during all that time he had been deprived of seeing her, thought it proper to talk with Mr. Goodman, concerning this new obstacle to his wishes :---that worthy gentleman was extremely troubled to be questioned on an affair, on which he had given Miss Betsy his word not to interfere, but finding himself very much pressed by a person whose passion he had encouraged, and who was the son of one with whom he had lived in a long friendship, he frankly confessed to him, that Mr. Truworth was indeed recommended to Miss Betsy by her brother ;---told him, he was sorry the thing had happened so, but had nothing

farther to do with it ;---that the young lady was at her own disposal, as to the article of marriage ; ---that he was ignorant how she would determine, and that it must be from herself alone he could learn what it was he might expect or hope.

Mr. Staple received little satisfaction from what Mr. Goodman had said, but resolved to take his advice, and, if possible, bring Miss Betsy to some eclaircissement of the fate he was to hope or fear. —Accordingly he came the next morning to visit her :—a liberty he had never taken, nor would now, if he had not despaired of finding her in an afternoon.

She gave herself, however, no airs of resentment on that account, but when he began to testify his discontent concerning Mr. Truworth, and the apprehensions he had of his having gained the preference in her heart, though the last who had solicited that happiness, she replied, in the most haughty tone, that she was surpris'd at the freedom he took with her ; —that she was, and ever would be, mistress of her actions and sentiments, and no man had a right to pry into either ; and concluded with saying, that she was sorry the civilities she had treated him with, should make him imagine he had a privilege of finding fault with those she shewed to others.

It is not to be doubted but that he made use of all the arguments in his power to convince her, that a true and perfect passion was never unaccompanied with jealous fears ;---he acknowledged the merits of Mr. Truworth ; “ but,” added he, “ the more he is possessed of, the more dangerous is he to my hopes ;”—and then begged her to consider the torments he had suffered, while being so long deprived of her presence, and knowing, at the same time, a rival was blessed with it.

Miss

Miss Betsy was not at this time in a humour either to be persuaded by the reasons, or softened by the submissions of her lover, and poor Mr. Staple, after having urged all that love, wit, despair, and grief could dictate, was obliged to depart more dissatisfied than he came.

In going out, he saw Mr. Goodman in the parlour, who gave him the good morning as he passed; —“ A sad one it has been to me,” answered he, with somewhat of horror in his countenance; “ but I will not endure the rack of many such. — With these words he flung out of the house, in order to go about what perhaps the reader is not at a loss to guess at.

C H A P. XXII.

One duel began, and another fought in the same morning, on Miss Betsy's account, are here related, with the manner in which the different antagonists behaved to each other.

WELL may the god of love be painted blind, --- those devoted to his influence are seldom capable of seeing things as they truly are; --- the smallest favour elates them with imaginary hopes, and the least coolness sinks them into despair; --- their joys, --- their griefs, --- their fears more frequently spring from ideal than effective causes. — Mr. Staple judged not, that Miss Betsy refused to ease his jealous apprehensions on the score of Mr. Truworth, because it was her natural temper to give pain to those that loved her, but because she had really an affection for that gentleman; --- looking on himself therefore as now abandoned to all hope, rage and revenge, took the whole possession

of his soul, and chased away the softer emotions thence.

Having heard Mr. Truworth say he was lodged in Pall-Mall, he went to the Cocoa-Tree, and there informing himself of the particular house where his rival might be found, sat down and wrote the following billet :

TO CHARLES TRUEWORTH, Esq;

“ Sir,

“ **B**OTH our wishes tend to the possession of
 “ one beautiful object ;——both cannot be
 “ happy in the accomplishment ;——it is fit there-
 “ fore the sword should decide the difference be-
 “ tween us, and put an end to those pretensions on
 “ the one side or the other, which it is not proba-
 “ ble either of us will otherwise recede from.——
 “ In confidence of your complying with this pro-
 “ posal, I shall attend you in the Green-Park, be-
 “ tween the hours of seven and eight to-morrow
 “ morning ;——as the affair concerns only our-
 “ selves, I think it both needless and unjust to en-
 “ gage any of our friends in it, so shall come alone,
 “ and expect you will do the same to, sir,

“ Your humble servant,

“ T. STAPLE.”

Mr. Truworth was at home, and, on receiving this, immediately, and without the least hesitation, wrote, and sent back by the same messenger, the following answer.

TO T. STAPLE, Esq;

“ Sir,

“ **T**HOUGH I cannot but think the decisi-
 “ on of our fate ought to be left entirely to
 “ the

“ the lady herself, to whom, whatever be the fortune of the sword, it must at last be referred ;
“ yet as I cannot, without being guilty of injustice
“ to my own honour and pretensions, refuse you
“ the satisfaction you require, shall not fail to meet
“ you at the time and place mentioned in yours,
“ till when, I am, Sir,

“ Your humble servant,

“ C. TRUEWORTH.”

By the stile of this letter it may be easily perceived, that Mr. Truworth was not very well pleased with this combat, though the greatness of his courage and spirit would not permit him to harbour the least thought of avoiding it ; yet whatever his thoughts were on this occasion, he visited Miss Betsy the same day, and discovered no part of them in his countenance,——his behaviour, on the contrary, was rather more sprightly than usual ;---he proposed to the two young ladies to go on some party of pleasure :——Miss Betsy answered, with her accustomed freedom, that she should like it very well ; but Miss Flora, who had been for three or four days past very sullen and ill-humoured, said one minute she would go, and the next that she would not, and gave herself such odd and capricious airs, that Miss Betsy told her, she believed her head was turned ; to which the other replied, tartly, that if the distemper was catching, it would be no wonder she should be infected, having it always so near her.——Miss Betsy replied, that she knew no greater proof of madness, than to punish one's self in the hope of mortifying another ;——“ but that shall never be my case,” continued she, “ as you will find,”——Then turning to Mr. Truworth, “ if you will accept of my company, “ without Miss Flora,” said she, laughing, “ we “ will take a walk into the park.”——It is not to be

be doubted, but that the lover gladly embraced this opportunity of having his mistress to himself.——
 “ ’Tis like Miss Betsey Thoughtless,” cried Miss Flora, “ and only like herself, to go abroad with
 “ a man alone.”——Miss Betsey regarded not this reproach, but catching up her fan and gloves, gave Mr. Truworth her hand to lead her where she had proposed, leaving the other so full of spite, that the tears gushed from her eyes.

’Tis likely the reader will be pretty much surprised, that Miss Flora, who had always seemed more ready than even Miss Betsey herself, to accept of invitations of the sort Mr. Truworth had made, should now all at once become so averse; but his curiosity for an explanation of this matter must be for a while postponed, others, for which he may be equally impatient, requiring to be first discussed.

Two duels having been agreed upon to be fought on the same morning, the respect due to the quality of lord ———, demands we should give that wherein he was concerned the preference in the repetition.

The hour appointed being arrived, lord ——— and his brother came into the field,---Mr. Bloomacre and his friend appeared immediately after.——
 “ You are the persons,” said lord ———, in an exulting tone, “ who made the invitation, but we
 “ are the first at table.”——“ ’Tis not yet past
 “ the time,” replied Bloomacre, looking on his watch, but the later we come the more eagerly we shall fall to.——In that instant all their swords were drawn; but they had scarce time to exchange one thrust before a posse of constables, with their assistants, armed with staves and clubs, rushed in between them, beat down their weapons, and carried them all four to the house of the high-bailiff of Westminster.

That

That gentleman, by virtue of his office, made a strict examination into what had passed, and having heard what both parties had to say, severely reprimanded the one for having given the provocation, and the other for the manner in which it was resented; — he told them, he had a right, in order to preserve the peace of Westminster, and the liberties of it, to demand, that they should find sureties for their future behaviour, but in regard to their quality and character, he would insist on no more than their own word and honour, that the thing should be mutually forgot, and that nothing of the same kind, which now had been happily prevented, should hereafter be attempted.

Lord ——— submitted to this injunction with a great deal of readiness, and Mr. Bloomacre, seeing no other remedy, did the same, after which the high-bailiff obliged them to embrace, in token of the sincerity of their reconciliation.

Thus ended an affair which had threatened such terrible consequences. — It made however a very great noise, and the discourse upon it was no way to the advantage of lord ———'s character, either for generosity or courage. — Let us now see the sequel of the challenge sent by Mr. Staple to Mr. Truworth.

These gentlemen met almost at the same time, in the place the challenger had appointed: — few words served to usher in the execution of the fatal purpose; Mr. Staple only said, “Come on, Sir, ———love is the word, and Miss Betsy Thoughtless be the victor's prize.” — With these words he drew his sword, — Mr. Truworth also drew his, and standing on his defence, seeing the other was about to push, cried, — “Hold, Sir! ——— your better fortune may triumph over my life, — but never make me yield up my pretensions to that amiable lady: — if I fall, I die her martyr,”

“ tyr,

“ tyr, and wish not to live but in the hope of serving her.” — These words making Mr. Staple imagine, that his rival had indeed the greatest encouragement to hope every thing, added to the fury he was before possessed of, “ Die then her martyr,” said he, and running upon him with more force than skill, received a slight wound in his own breast, while aiming at the other’s heart.

It would be needless to mention all the particulars of this combat, — I shall only say, that the too great eagerness of Mr. Staple gave the other an advantage over him, which must have been fatal to him from a less generous enemy ; but the temperate Mr. Truworth seemed to take an equal care to avoid hurting his rival, as to avoid being hurt by him ; — seeing, however, that he was about to make a furious push at him, he ran in between, closed with him, and Mr. Staple’s foot happening to slip, he fell at full length upon the earth, his sword at the same time dropped out of his hand, which Mr. Truworth took up. — “ The victory is yours,” cried he, “ take also my life, for I disdain to keep it.” — “ No,” replied Mr. Truworth, “ I equally disdain to take an advantage, which meer chance has given me : — rise, Sir, and let us finish the dispute between us, as become men of honour.” — With these words he returned him his sword. — “ I should be unworthy to be ranked among that number,” said Mr. Staple, on receiving it, “ to employ this weapon against the breast, whose generosity restored it, were any thing but Miss Betsy at stake ; — but what is life ! — what is even honour, without the hope of her ! — I therefore accept your noble offer, and death or conquest be my lot !” — They renewed the engagement with greater violence than before : — after several passes, all Mr. Truworth’s dexterity could not hinder him from

from receiving a wound on his left side, but he gave the other, at the same time, so deep a one in his right arm, that it deprived him, in an instant, of the power of continuing the fight; on which Mr. Truworth dropping the point of his sword, ran to him, “ I am sorry, Sir,” said he, “ for the accident has happened;—I see you are much hurt, ——— permit me to assist you as well as I am able, and attend you where proper care may be taken of you.”——“ I do not deserve this goodness,” answered Mr. Staple, “ but it is the will of heaven that you should vanquish every way.”

Mr. Truworth then seeing the blood run quite down upon his hand, stripped up the sleeve, and bound the wound from which it issued, as tight as he could with his handkerchief, after which they went together to an eminent surgeon near Piccadilly.——On examination of his wounds, neither that in his arm, nor in his breast, appeared to be at all dangerous, the flesh being only pierced, and no artery or tendon touched.——Mr. Truworth seemed only assiduous in his cares for the hurts he had given his rival without mentioning the least word of that, which he had received himself, ’till an elderly gentleman, who happened to be with the surgeon when they came in, and had all the time been present, perceiving some blood upon the side of his coat, a little above the hip, cried out, “ Sir, “ you neglect yourself.——I fear you have not escaped unhurt.”——A trifle,!’ said Mr. Truworth, “ a meer scratch, I believe:—— ’tis time enough to think of that.”——Nor would he suffer the surgeon, though he bled very fast, to come near him, ’till he had done with Mr. Staple.——It was, indeed, but a slight wound, which Mr. Truworth had received, though happening among a knot of veins, occasioned the effusion of a pretty

ty deal of blood ; for the stoppage of which the surgeon applied an immediate remedy, and told him, that it required little for a cure besides keeping it from air.

Mr. Staple, who had been deeply affected with the concern this generous enemy had expressed for him, was equally rejoiced at hearing the wound he had given him would be attended with no bad consequences.— Every thing that was needful being done for both, the old gentleman prevailed upon them to go with him to a tavern a few doors off, having first obtained the surgeon's leave, who told him, a glass or two of wine could be of no prejudice to either.

This good-natured gentleman, who was called Mr. Chatfree, used to come frequently to Mr. Goodman's house, had some knowledge of Mr. Staple, and though he was wholly unacquainted with Mr. Truworth, conceived so great an esteem for him, from his behaviour towards the person he had fought with, that he thought he could not do a more meritorious action, than to reconcile to each other two such worthy persons.—What effect his endeavours, or rather their own nobleness of sentiments produced, shall presently be shewn.

C H A P. XXIII.

Among other things necessary to be told, gives an account of the success of a plot laid by Mr. Chatfree, for the discovery of Miss Betsy's real inclinations.

THOUGH Mr. Goodman had as yet no intimation of the accidents of that morning, yet was he extremely uneasy ; — the looks, as well as words of Mr. Staple, in going out of his house
the

the day before, were continually in his mind, and he could not forbear apprehending some fatal consequence would, one time or other, attend the levity of Miss Betsy's behaviour and conduct, in regard to her admirers: he was also both surprized and vexed, that Mr. Bloomacre, from whom he expected an explanation of the Westminster-abbey adventure, had not come according to his request. — This last motive of his disquiet was, however, soon removed: Mr. Bloomacre was no less impatient to clear himself of all blame concerning the transactions of that night, had no sooner finished his affair with lord ———, and was dismissed by the high-bailiff, than he came directly to Mr. Goodman's, and recited to him, and all the ladies, the whole of what had passed.

Miss Betsy laughed prodigiously, but Mr. Goodman shook his head, on hearing the particulars related by Mr. Bloomacre, and, after that gentleman was gone, reproved, as he thought it his duty to do, the inconsiderateness of her conduct: — he told her, that as she was alone, she ought to have left the abbey as soon as divine service was ended; — that for a person of her sex, age, and appearance, to walk in a place where there were always a great concourse of young sparks, who come for no other purpose than to make remarks upon the ladies, could not but be looked on as very odd by all who saw her. — “There was no rain,” said he, “till a long time after the service was ended, and you might then, in all probability, have got a chair; — or, if not, the walk over the park could not have been a very great fatigue.”

Miss Betsy blushed extremely, not through a conscious shame of imagining what she had done deserved the least rebuke, but because her spirit, yet unbroke, could not bear controul: — she replied, that as she meant no ill; those who censured her
were

were most in fault. — “That is very true,” answered Mr. Goodman; but, my dear child, you “cannot but know it is a fault which too many “in the world are guilty of. — I doubt not of “your innocence, but would have you consider, “that reputation is also of some value; — that the “honour of a young maid like you, is a flower “of so tender and delicate a nature, that the least “breath of scandal withers and destroys it. — In “fine, that it is not enough to be good, without “behaving in such a manner as shall make others “acknowledge us to be so.”

Miss Betsey had too much understanding not to be sensible what her guardian said, on this occasion, was perfectly just; and also, that he had a right to offer his advice, whenever her conduct rendered it necessary, but could not help being vexed, that any thing she did should be liable to censure, as she thought it merited none: — she made no further reply, however, to what Mr. Goodman said, though he continued his remonstrances, and probably would have gone on yet longer, if not interrupted by the coming in of Mr. Chatfree. — This gentleman having parted from the two wounded rivals came directly to Mr. Goodman’s, in order to see how Miss Betsey would receive the intelligence he had to bring her.

After paying his compliments to Mr. Goodman, and the other ladies, he came towards Miss Betsey, and looking on her with a more than ordinary earnestness in his countenance, “Ah, madam!” said he, “I shall never hereafter see you without remembering what Cowley says of a lady who “might I suppose be like you:

“So fatal, and withal so fair,

“We’re told destroying angels are.”

Though Miss Betsey was not at that time in a humour to have any great relish for raillery, yet she

she could not forbear replying to what this old gentleman said, in the manner in which she imagined he spoke.——“ You are, at least, past the age of
 “ being destroyed by any weapons I carry about
 “ me,” cried she,——“ but pray what meaning
 “ have you in this terrible simile ?” ——“ My
 “ meaning is as terrible as the simile,” answered he ;
 “ and though I believe you to be very much the
 “ favourite of heaven, I know not how you will
 “ atone for the mischief you have been the occa-
 “ sion of this morning ;——but it may be,” con-
 “ tinued he, “ you think it nothing that those mur-
 “ dering eyes of yours have set two gentlemen a
 “ fighting. ;”

Miss Betsy, supposing no other than that he had heard of the quarrel between Mr. Bloomacre and lord——, replied merrily, “ Pray accuse my
 “ eyes of no such thing,—— they are very inno-
 “ cent I assure you.”——“ Yes,” cried Mr. Good-
 man, and lady Mellasin at the same time, “ we can
 “ clear Miss Betsy of this accusation.”

“ What !” rejoined Mr. Chatfree, hastily,
 “ was not Mr. Staple and Mr. Truworth rivals
 “ for her love ?” ——“ Mr. Staple and Mr. True-
 “ worth,” said Miss Betsy, in a good deal of
 consternation, “ pray what of them !” “ Oh !
 “ the most inveterate duel,” answered he, “ they
 “ fought above half an hour, and poor Mr. Staple
 “ is dead of his wounds.” ——“ Dead !” cried
 Miss Betsy, with a great scream.——lady Mel-
 lasin and Miss Flora seemed very much alarm-
 ed ; but Mr. Goodman was ready to sink from his
 chair, ’till Mr. Chatfree, unseen by Miss Betsy,
 winked upon him, in token that he was not in earn-
 est in what he said.

The distraction in which this young lady now
 appeared,—— the concern she expressed for Mr.
 Staple, and her indignation against Mr. Truworth,
 would

would have made any one think the former had much the preference in her esteem, 'till Mr. Chatfree, after having listened to her exclamations on this score, cried out on a sudden, " Ah, madam, " what a mistake has the confusion I was involved " in made me guilty of.——Alas ! I have deceived " you, though without designing to do so,—— " Mr. Staple lives,—— it is Mr. Truworth who " has fallen a sacrifice to his unsuccessful passion for " you."

" Truworth dead !" cried Miss Betsey, O God ! " ——and does his murderer live to triumph in " the fall of the best and most accomplished man " on earth ?——Oh ! may all the miseries, that " heaven and fortune can inflict, light on him ! — " Is he not secured, Mr. Chatfree ?—— Will he " not be hanged ?"

Mr. Chatfree could hold his countenance no longer, but bursting into a violent fit of laughter, " Ah, Miss Betsey !——Miss Betsey !" said he, " I " have caught you ? —— Mr. Truworth I find " then is the happy man." —— " What do you " mean Mr. Chatfree ? " cried Miss Betsey very much amazed.——" I beg your pardon," answered he, " for the fright I have put you in ; but be " comforted, for Mr. Truworth is not dead I " assure you, and, I doubt not, lives as much " your slave as ever."——" I do not care what " he is, if he is not dead," said Miss Betsey ; " but pray for what end did you invent this fine " story ? " —— " Nay, madam," resumed he, " it is not altogether my own inventing neither ; " for Mr. Truworth and Mr. Staple have had a " duel this morning, and both of them are wound- " ed, though not so dangerously as I pretended, " meerly to try, by the concern you would ex- " press, which of them you were most inclined " to

“to favour,——and I have done it i’faith,——
“Mr. Truworth is the man.”

Lady Mellasin, who had not spoke during all this conversation, now cried out, “Aye, Mr. Chatfree, we shall soon have a wedding, I believe.”——“Believe, madam,” said he, “why your ladyship may swear it;——for my part I will not give above a fortnight for the conclusion,——and I will venture to wish the fair bride joy on the occasion, for he is a fine gentleman,——a very fine gentleman indeed, and I think she could not have made a better choice.” With these words he wiped his mouth, and advanced to Miss Betsy, in order to salute her; but pushing him scornfully back, “None of your flights, good Mr. Chatfree,” said she, “if I thought you were in earnest, I would never see the face of Mr. Truworth more.”

This did not hinder the pleasant old gentleman from continuing his raillery;——he plainly told Miss Betsy that she was in love,——that he saw the marks of it upon her, and that it was in vain for her to deny it.——Lady Mellasin laughed very heartily to see the fret Miss Betsy was in, at hearing Mr. Chatfree talk in this manner; but Miss Flora, to whom one would imagine this scene would have been diverting enough, never opened her lips to utter one syllable; but made such grimaces, as had they been taken notice of, would have shewn how little she was pleased with it.

Mr. Goodman had been so much struck with the first account given by Mr. Chatfree, that he was not to be roused by any thing that gentleman said afterwards;——he reflected, that though the consequences of the rencounter between the two rivals had been less fatal than he had been made to imagine, yet it might have happened, and indeed been naturally expected; he could not therefore forbear interrupting

interrupting his friend's mirth, by remonstrating to Miss Betsy, in the most serious terms, the great error she was guilty of, in encouraging a plurality of lovers at the same time :——he told her, that gentlemen of Mr. Trueworth's and Mr. Staple's character and fortune, ought not to be trifled with, “ Suppose,” said he, “ that one or both of them had indeed been killed, how could you have answered to yourself, or to the world, the having been the sad occasion ?”

“ Lord, Sir,” replied Miss Betsy, walking up and down the room in a good deal of agitation,—“ what would you have me do ? — I do not want the men to love me,—and if they will play the fool and fight, and kill one another, it is none of my fault.”

In fine, between Mr. Chatfree's raillery, and Mr. Goodman's admonitions, this poor young lady was teized beyond all patience, and finding it impossible to put a stop to either, she flew out of the room, ready to cry with vexation.

She was no sooner gone, than Mr. Goodman took Mr. Chatfree into his closet, and having learned from him all the particulars of the late duel, and consulted with him what was proper to be done to prevent any farther mischief of the like sort, they went together to Mr. Staple's lodging, in order to use their utmost endeavours to prevail on that gentleman to desist the prosecution of his addresses to Miss Betsy.

C H A P. XXIV.

Will satisfy the reader's curiosity in some points, and increase it in others.

THOUGH Mr. Goodman, under whose care, and in whose house, Miss Betsy had been for upwards of a year, knew much more of that young lady's humour and disposition, than Mr. Chatfree, who saw her but seldom, could possibly do, and could not be brought to think as he did, that the merits of Mr. Truworth had made any effectual impression on her heart ; yet he imagined, that to propagate such an opinion in Mr. Staple would conduce very much to persuade him to break off his courtship, which was a thing very much desired by Mr. Goodman, as he was certain the continuance of it would be attended with almost insurmountable difficulties, and create many vexations and disputes, when Mr. Francis Thoughtless came to town.

The two old gentlemen went on together, discoursing on this affair, 'till they came to the lodgings of Mr. Staple, where they found him sitting in an easy chair, leaning on a table, with papers and a standish before him ;—they perceived he had been writing, for the pen was not out of his hand when they entered the room :—he threw it down, however, as soon as he saw them, and rose to receive them with a great deal of politeness, though accompanied with an air, which, in spite of his endeavours to conceal it, discovered he laboured under an extraordinary dejection of spirits.

“ I am glad,” said Mr. Chatfree, pointing to the pen, “ to see you are able to make use of that weapon, as I feared your arm had been too much prejudiced by another.” — “ I have found some
“ difficulty,

“ difficulty, indeed, in doing it,” replied the wounded gentleman ; “ but something, which seemed to me a case of necessity, obliged me to exert my utmost efforts for that purpose.”

After the first civilities were over, and they were all seated, Mr. Goodman and Mr. Chatfree began to open the business upon which they came ; — Mr. Goodman represented to him, in the most pathetic terms, the deep concern he had been in, for having ever encouraged his addressee to Miss Betsy, and excused himself for having done so, by his ignorance, at that time, that Mr. Truworth had been previously recommended by her brother ; — he then gave him some hints, that the civilities Miss Betsy had treated him with, he feared, were rather owing to that little vanity, which is generally the companion of youth and beauty, than to that real regard, which his passion and person merited from her, and said, he heartily wished to see him withdraw his affections from an object, where he could not now flatter him with the least hope of a suitable return.

“ No, no,” cried Mr. Chatfree, interrupting him hastily, “ you may take my word, she is as much in love, as a girl of her temper can be, with Mr. Truworth, and I do not doubt but you will all see the effects of it, as soon as her brother comes to town.” — Mr. Goodman, on this, took an opportunity of telling Mr. Staple, that the ascendant that young gentleman had over his sister, and the zeal he expressed for the interest of his friend, would certainly go a great way in determining the point ; and added, that if it were true, as his friend suggested, that she had really an inclination for Mr. Truworth, she would then avow it, and make a merit of it to her brother, as if done merely in regard to him.

Many

Many other arguments were urged by these two gentlemen, in order to convince Mr. Staple of the little probability there was of succeeding with Miss Betsy, all which he listened to attentively, never interrupting what either of them said, 'till perceiving they had ended all they had to offer on the subject, he made them this reply.

“Gentlemen,” said he, “I am infinitely obliged to you both for this visit, and the friendly purpose of it, which, I perceive, was to give me that advice, which you might reasonably think I wanted.—I have heard, and I believe have not lost one word, at least, I am sure no part of the meaning of what you have delivered : —I own there is great justice in every thing you have alledged, and am pleased to think the arguments you bring are such, as, before your coming here, I had myself brought against the folly of my own unhappy passion for Miss Betsy ; but, gentlemen, it is not that I am capable of being deterred from prosecuting it, by any thing I might have to apprehend, either to her own inclinations, or her brother’s persuasions, but for other reasons, which, at present, perhaps, you may be ignorant of, yet are such, as to conceal I should but half be just. — Be pleased, Sir,” continued he, addressing himself to Mr. Goodman, and giving him a paper, “to read that letter, and see what my resolutions are, and the motives I have for them.”

Mr. Goodman was beginning to look over the paper, but Mr. Staple requested he would read it aloud, as he desired that Mr. Chatfree should be partaker of the contents ; on which he read, with an audible voice, these lines :

TO CHARLES TRUEWORTH, Esq;

“ Sir,
 “ **W**HEN I proposed the decision of our fate
 “ by force of arms, I offered, at the same
 “ time, that the glory of serving Miss Betsey should
 “ be the victor’s triumph.— This your too great
 “ modesty declined; — but, Sir, though you
 “ scorned to accept the advantage your superior
 “ skill acquired, your generosity, in spite of you,
 “ has gained.— I loved Miss Betsey, and would
 “ have maintained my claim against all who should
 “ have dared to dispute her with me; while ju-
 “ stice, and while honour permitted me to do so;
 “ but though I am unfortunate, I never can be
 “ base.— My life, worthless as it is, has twice
 “ been in your power, and I should be no less
 “ hateful to my self, than contemptible to the
 “ world, should I offer to interrupt the peace of
 “ him that gave it.— May you be as successful in
 “ love as you have been in fight, and the amiable
 “ object be convinced of her own happiness in
 “ making yours.— I desist for ever from the vain
 “ hopes I once was flattered with, and the first
 “ Wish my soul now harbours, is to be worthy
 “ the title of your friend, as I am bound to avow
 “ myself,

“ With the greatest sincerity,

SIR,

“ Your most obliged,

“ And most humble servant,

“ T. STAPLE.”

“ Nothing,” said Mr. Goodman, as soon as he
 had done reading, “ can equal your generosity, in
 “ forming this resolution, but the wisdom in per-
 “ sisting in it; and if I find you do so, shall have
 “ more

“ more reason to congratulate you upon it, than I
“ should think I ha’ on the success of your wishes
“ in marrying Miss Betsy.”

“ I should laugh now, “ cried Mr. Chatfree,
“ if Mr. Truworth, in a fit of generosity too,
“ should also take it into his head to resign his pre-
“ tensions, and choose to wear the willow, instead
“ of the myrtle garland, because you do so.”——
“ He has already proved his generosity,”——replied
Mr. Staple with a sigh, which he was unable to re-
frain, “ and has no need to give the severe testi-
“ mony you mention, if he is so happy as you
“ seem to think he is ;-- but,” continued he, “ it
“ is not my business to examine who yields, or
“ who pursues Miss Betsy,---I am fixed in my de-
“ termination of seeing her no more, and as soon
“ as I am recovered from the hurts I have receiv-
“ ed on her account, will go into the country,
“ and seek a cure in absence for my unavailing pas-
“ sion.”

Neither Mr. Goodman, nor Mr. Chatfree, were so old as to have forgot how hard it is for a youthful heart to give up its darling wishes, and sacrifice desire to discretion.—— They said abundance of handsome things, omitted nothing which they imagined might add to the fortitude of his present way of thinking. He, on the other hand, to take from them all remains of doubt, concerning the sincerity of his intentions, sealed the letter he had wrote to Mr. Truworth, and sent it to that gentleman, while they were in the room.

Mr. Goodman was extremely pleased in his mind, that an affair, which, for some time past, had given him a good deal of anxiety, was in so fair a way of being ended, without further mischief : — he took no notice, however, on his return home, at least not before Miss Betsy, of the visit he had been making, or that he knew any thing more of

Mr. Staple, than what she had been told herself by Mr. Chatfree.

In the mean time, this young lady affected to appear more grave than ordinary :—I say, affected to be so ; for as she had been at first shocked by Mr. Chatfree's report, and afterwards teized by his raillery, and then reprimanded, on the score of her conduct, by Mr. Goodman, she was not displeased in her heart at the dangerous proof, which the two lovers had given of their passion.

She lost, however, great part of the satisfaction this adventure might have afforded her, for want of a proper person to whom she might have talked freely on it.---She had, indeed, many acquaintance, in some of whom she, doubtless, might have confided ; but she did not choose to be herself the reporter of this story to any one, who had not heard of it from other hands ; and Miss Flora, who knew the whole, and was her companion and bed-fellow, was grown of late so sullen and peevish, as not to be capable of either giving or receiving any diversion in discourses of that nature.

It is certain, that there never was a more astonishing alteration in the temper of any one person in so short a time, than in that of Miss Flora :—her once gay and spirituous behaviour, which, without being a beauty, rendered her extremely agreeable, was now become all dull and gloomy.---Instead of being fond of a great deal of company, she now rather chose to avoid than covet the society of any one ;---she said but little, and when she spoke, it was only to contradict whatever she heard alledged by others ;—a heavy melancholy, mixed with an ill-natured frown, perpetually lowered upon her brow :--- in fine, if she had been a little older, she might have sat for the picture of Envy.---Miss Betsy, by being most with her, felt most the effects of her bad humour ; but as she thought
she

she could easily account for it, the sweetness of her disposition made her rather pity than resent the change.

A young linnen-draper, of whom lady Mellasin some times bought things, had taken a great fancy to Miss Flora, and not doubting but she had a fortune in some measure answerable to the appearance she made, got a friend to intercede with lady Mellasin, for leave to pay his respects to her daughter :—this being granted, he made several visits at the house, and was very well received by Miss Flora herself, as well as by those who had the disposal of her, 'till coming on the topic of fortune, Mr. Goodman plainly told him, that having many relations of his own to provide for, the most he could spare to Miss Flora was five hundred pounds. ---The draper's passion was very much damped, on hearing his mistress's portion was like to be so small ;---he told Mr. Goodman, that though he was very much charmed with the person and behaviour of the young lady, and should be proud of the honour of an alliance with such a family, yet as he was a young man, and but lately set up for himself, he wanted money to throw into trade, and could not think of marrying without more than three times the sum offered ;---he added, that a young lady of her birth, and bringing-up, would expect to live as she had been accustomed, which he could no way promise she should do, without a fortune sufficient to defray the expence.

Mr. Goodman thought the reasons he gave were very just, and as he was unwilling to stretch his hand any farther than he had said, and was too honest to promise more than he intended to perform, replied with the same freedom that the other had spoke, that in truth he did not think Flora would make a fit wife for a tradesman ;---that the girl was young enough, not ugly, and it was his opinion

that she should wait till a more suitable match should offer. In a word, Mr. Goodman's answer put a final end to the courtship, and though Miss Flora affected to disdain the mercenary views, as she termed them, of the draper, and never spoke of him but with the utmost contempt, yet her melancholy coming on soon after he had desisted his addresses, made Miss Betsy think she had reason to impute it to no other cause; and therefore, in meer compassion to this imaginary mortification, was so far from retorting any of those little taunts, and malicious inuendos, with which she was continually treated by the other, that she took all the pains she could to alleviate the vexation she saw her in, and sooth her into a better humour.

The reader will probably think as Miss Betsy did, but the falsity of this conjecture, and the cruel return the good-nature of that young lady met with, will in due time and place appear.

C H A P. XXV.

Contains some passages, which, perhaps, may be looked upon as pretty extraordinary.

ACCORDING to the common rule of honour among gentlemen, Mr. Truworth had certainly behaved so, as not to have either that, or his good-nature called in question; but this was not enough to satisfy him:--- he could not be easy under the reflection, that the obligations he had conferred gave a painful gratitude to the receiver.

He was deeply affected with Mr. Staple's letter; ---he doubted not but that gentleman in forcing himself to resign his pretensions to Miss Betsy, must

must suffer the extremest agonies ; and heartily commiserating a case, which, had fortune so decreed, might have been his own, immediately wrote to him in the following terms :

TO T. STAPLE, Esq;

“ Sir,

“ I AM ashamed to find the little I have done so
“ much over-rated, by a person, who, I am
“ certain, is capable of the greatest things ; but
“ should be involved in more confusion still, should
“ any consideration of me, or my happiness, pre-
“ vail on you to become an enemy to your own.
“ — I am altogether unacquainted with what kind
“ of sentiments either of us is regarded by the fair
“ object of our mutual wishes.---It is highly pro-
“ bable her young heart may, as yet, be quite in-
“ sensible of those we have endeavoured to inspire
“ it with ;---for my own part, as I have yet no
“ reason to despair, so I have had also but little
“ room for hope.---You, Sir, have an equal chance,
“ for any thing I know, or can boast of to the con-
“ trary, and as you saw I refused to hazard my
“ pretensions on the point of the sword, neither
“ justice, nor honour, requires you should for-
“ feit yours, though an accident gave me the
“ advantage of you in the field.---’Tis by Miss
“ Betsy herself our fate is to be judged.---’Tis
“ yet a moot-point whether either will succeed in
“ the attempt of pleasing her. We may, per-
“ haps, contend for an airy expectation, while ano-
“ ther more fortunate shall bear away the prize
“ from both ; but if one of us is decreed to be
“ the happy man, on which soever the lot shall
“ fall, he ought not to incur the hatred of the
“ other.

“ I gladly embrace the offer of your friendship,
 “ and whatever is the fortune of our love, should
 “ in that, as in all other events, endeavour to
 “ prove, that I am,

“ With an equal sincerity,

“ S I R,

“ Your very much obliged,

“ And most humble servant,

“ C. TRUEWORTH.”

Mr. Staple read this letter many times over, but received not all the satisfaction, which the author intended it should give him, although he acknowledged the generosity of his rival, yet he could not conceive there was a possibility for a man in love to be easy under the addresses of another, without knowing himself secure of not being prejudiced by them:—he, therefore, concluded that Mr. Chatfree was right in his conjecture, and that Miss Betsey only waited for her brother's coming to town to declare in favour of Mr. Truworth.

This gentleman had a great share of spirit, and some pride, and these making him disdain to pursue a fruitless aim, and suffering himself to be publicly overcome by Mr. Truworth in love, as he had been in fight, very much contributed to enable him to keep that resolution he had formed in the presence of Mr. Goodman and Mr. Chatfree.

He answered Mr. Truworth's letter, however, with the utmost complaisance, but without letting him know any part of his intentions, in relation to Miss Betsey, fearing lest any further contest on this affair might draw from that gentleman fresh proofs of a generosity, to which, already, he looked upon himself as too much obliged.

Miss Betsey little suspecting what had passed between her too lovers, since their meeting in the Green park, received Mr. Truworth, when he
 came

came to visit her the same day, as usual, with a great deal of good-humour.—She took not any notice that she had heard of the duel, imagining, that he would himself inform her of it, and he not thinking it would become him to do so, as having had the advantage of his rival, 'tis probable there would have been no mention made of it, if lady Mellasin had not come into the room, and told him, that she would not have broke in upon his conversation with Miss Betsy, if it had been possible for her to have resisted the pleasure of congratulating him, not only on his safety, but also on his coming off victor in the field of battle.

The modesty of Mr. Trueworth would not suffer him to hear these last words without blushing; but soon recovering himself, “Fortune, madam,” answered he, “is not always the most favourable
“to the most deserving :—her partial smiles will
“never make me vain, or happy, unless,” continued he, looking tenderly on Miss Betsy, “she
“would add to her indulgence here, and give me
“room to hope, my services to this lady might
“one day be crowned with the same success, as
“she this morning gave my sword.” —“The
“one,” said Miss Betsy, smiling, “has nothing
“to do with the other, and I do not know how
“to think a man, who really wishes nothing so
“much as to appear agreeable in the eyes of his
“mistress, would run the hazard of making the
“contemptible figure of a culprit at the bar of a
“court of judicature.”

They then fell into some discourse on duelling, and Mr. Trueworth could not help joining with the ladies, in condemning the folly of that custom, which, contrary to the known laws of the land, and oftentimes contrary to his own reason too, obliges the gentleman either to obey the call of the person who challenges him to the field, or by refusing, submit

himself not only to all the insults his adversary is pleased to treat him with, but also to be branded with the infamous character of a coward, by all that know him.

Nothing material enough to be related, happened in this visit, except that Miss Flora, who had been abroad when Mr. Trueworth came, and returned home a small time before he went away, talked much more in half an hour, than she had done for some whole days past; but it was in so odd a manner, sometimes praising, sometimes blaming his conduct, in regard to the transactions of that morning, that he could not well determine in his mind, whether she was a friend, or an enemy to the success of his passion.—Miss Betsy herself was a little surprized, but nothing relating to that young lady dwelt much upon her mind, as she really thought she had no design in any thing she said or did.—The behaviour of Mr. Staple ran much more in her head; she knew he was pretty much wounded, and therefore might suppose him unable to wait on her in person, but having expected he would send his compliments to her, either by letter or message, and finding he did neither the whole day, it seemed to her a thing too strange to be accounted for:—she was, however, eased of the suspense she was in, on that score, by receiving from him, as she was at breakfast the next morning, the following epistle.

TO MISS BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

“ *Madam,*

“ **A** Brother’s recommendation, superior me-
 “ rit, and your own inclination, have all
 “ united to plead my rival’s cause, and gain the
 “ verdict against unhappy me!—I ought more
 “ early to have seen the vanity of attempting to
 “ succeed,

“ succeed, where Mr. Truworth was the candidate ; yet hurried by the violence of my passion, I rushed into an action, which, by adding to his glory, has shewn my demerits in a more conspicuous light than ever.

“ It would be needless to repeat what happened yesterday ; I cannot doubt, madam, but you are well acquainted with all the particulars of my folly, and the just punishment it met with. ---I have only to say the generosity of my rival, and my conqueror, has restored me to my lost reason, and convinced me, that whatever preference he may be so happy as to have gained in your esteem, he is indebted for it to the excellence of your good sense, and not that partial fancy which frequently misguides the choice of persons of your sex and age.

“ I would have waited on you in person to take my everlasting leave, but am not certain how far I ought to depend on the strength of my resolution in your presence.---Permit, therefore, my pen to do that which my tongue would falter in performing. --- Yes, madam, I must forego, renounce for ever those glorious expectations with which so lately I flattered my fond heart ;--henceforth must think on you as the fallen father of mankind did on the tree of life : ---the merits of my too accomplished rival are the flaming swords which drive me from my once hoped-for paradise ; and while I mourn my unhappy fate, compels me to own it to be just.---Farewel, O most aimable of you sex ! Farewel for ever! ---I have troubled you too long, and have no excuse to make, but that it is the last you will receive from me.---May the blest guardians of the fair and good be your constant directors, and shield you from all ills.---

“ be

“ be assured that till I cease to exist, I shall not
 “ cease to be,

“ With the sincerest good wishes,

“ MADAM,

“ Your most faithful,

“ Though unfortunate, humble servant,

“ T. STAPLE.”

Miss Betsey was astonished to that degree, on reading so unexpected a declaration, that she could scarce believe she was awake for some moments, and thought it all a dream; she broke off, and made several pauses in the reading, crying out, “ Good God!--Is it possible?---What does the
 “ man mean?---How came such stuff into his
 “ head?---He is mad sure!”

Mr. Goodman, who had some notion of what had put her into this ferment, and was willing to be more confirmed, asked her, in a pleasant way, what had occasioned it?---“ Indeed, Sir,” replied Miss Betsey, endeavouring to compose herself, “ I have
 “ been so confounded, that I knew not where I
 “ was, or who was in the room,---I ask your pardon,---but this, I hope will plead my excuse,”
 “ continued she, throwing the letter on the table,
 “ your friend has given over his suit to me, which
 “ I am very glad of; but the motives, which he
 “ pretends oblige him to it, are so odd and capricious, as not to be accounted for.”

“ Given over his suit,” cried lady Mellasin, hastily;---“ O! pray, let us hear on what pretence?”---On which Mr. Goodman read the letter aloud, the very repetition of which renewed Miss Betsey’s agitations.---“ He has acted,” said Mr. Goodman, as soon as he had done reading, “ like a man of sense and resolution, and
 “ I see no cause why you should be discontented at the loss of a lover, whose pretensions
 “ you

“you did not design to favour.”—“He was very
 “hasty, however,” cried Miss Betsy, scornfully,
 “in concluding for me.—What did the man think
 “I was to be won at once?—Did he imagine his
 “merits were so extraordinary, that there required
 “no more to obtain, than barely to ask? but I
 “give myself no concern on that score, I assure
 “you, Sir;—it is the insolence of his accusing
 “me of being in love that vexes me.—Who told
 “him, I wonder! or, how came such a thing
 “into his head, that Mr. Truworth had the pre-
 “ference in my esteem?—By the manner in
 “which he speaks of him in this letter, he has
 “found more perfections in him, than ever I did,
 “and would make one think he were himself ena-
 “moured of his rival’s merits.”

In answer to all this, he told her with a serious, air, that Mr. Staple was bound by all those ties, which engage a noble mind, to act in the manner he had done;—that he had been twice indebted to Mr. Truworth for his life, and that the whole behaviour of that gentleman towards him, both during the combat, and after it was over, demanded all the returns that gratitude could pay.

He afterwards run into a detail of all the particulars of what had passed between the two rivals, many of which the ladies were ignorant of before.—Lady Mellasin joined with her husband, in extolling the greatness of soul, which Mr. Truworth had shewn on this occasion; but Miss Flora said little, and what she did was rather in praise of Mr. Staple,—“Mr. Truworth,” cried she, “is
 “a fine gentleman enough, but has done no more
 “than what any man of honour would do; and,
 “for my part, I think that Mr. Staple, in putting
 “the self-denial, he has now shewn, in practice,
 “discovers more of the hero and philosopher, than
 “the other has done.”

The conversation, on this topic, lasted some time, and probably I would not have broke off so soon, if it had not been interrupted by two young ladies coming in to ask Miss Betsey and Miss Flora if they were not for the park that morning? To which they having agreed, and promised to call on them in their way, went up into their chamber, in order to prepare themselves for the walk proposed.

CH A P. XXVI.

Discovers to Miss Betsey a piece of treachery she little expected to hear of.

MISS Flora, who had been deterred from saying all she had a mind to do, on the affair between Miss Betsey's two lovers, now took this opportunity of giving her tongue all the latitude it wanted. They were no sooner come into the chamber, than, "Lord, my dear," cried she, with a tone vastly different from that, in which she had spoke to her of late, "how vexed am I for you!--It will certainly go all about the town; that you are in love with Truworth, and there will be such cabals, and such wispering about it, that you will be plagued to death :--I could tear him to pieces, methinks; for I am sure he is a vain fellow, and the hint must first come from himself."

"I never saw any thing like vanity in him," replied Miss Betsey, "and I am rather inclined to believe Mr. Staple got the notion from the idle rattle of Mr. Chatfree."--"Mr. Chatfree," said Miss Flora, "thought of no such thing himself, till he had been at the tavern with Mr. Truworth; but if I was in your place, I would

"convince

“convince Mr. Staple and the world, that I was not capable of the weakness imputed to me.”

“Why, what would you have me do?” cried Miss Betsy.---“I would have you write to Mr. Staple,” answered the other, “and let him know the deception his rival has put upon him.”---Miss Betsy, who had always an aversion to any thing of this kind, and thought it too great a condescension to write on any score to a man, who had pretended love to her, shook her head at this proposal, and exclaimed against it with the utmost vehemence.

Miss Flora made use of all the arguments she could think on, to bring her off, from what she called so ill-judged a pride ;---among other things, she told her, that in compassion to the despair that gentleman had so feelingly expressed in his letter, she ought to give him the consolation of knowing, that if he had not gained so far on her affections as he wished, it was not because his rival had gained more ; and added, that the step she perswaded her to take, was such, as common justice to her own character had a right to exact from her.

Miss Betsy heard, but was not to be prevailed upon by all she could say on this subject ; but the other, who had a greater share of artifice, than, perhaps, was ever known in one of her years, would not give over the design she had formed in her head, and perceiving that the writing to a man was the greatest objection Miss Betsy had to letting Mr. Staple know she was not so much attached to his rival, as he imagined, took another way of working her to her purpose, which she thought would be less irksome.

“Well then, my dear Miss Betsy,” said she, in the most flattering accent, “I will tell you the only method you can take, and I am glad I have been so lucky to hit upon it :---you shall let me go, and make Mr. Staple a visit as of my own accord ;

“ accord ;---I shall take care not to drop a syllable
 “ that may give him room to think you know of
 “ my coming ; but yet as he may suppose I am
 “ enough in your secrets to be mistress of this, or,
 “ at least, not altogether a stranger to it, he will,
 “ doubtless, say something to me concerning the
 “ matter ; but if he should not, it will be easy for
 “ me, in the way of discourse, and as it were by
 “ chance, to express myself in such terms as will
 “ entirely clear you, and rid him of all the apprehensions
 “ he is under, of your being in love with
 “ Mr. Trueworth.”

Miss Betsey was not in her heart at all averse to Mr. Staple’s having that eclairsissement Miss Flora had mentioned, and was much less shocked at this proposal, than she had been at the former, offered to her consideration for that purpose ; yet did not seem to come into it, till the other had lavished all the arguments, that woman, witty and willful to obtain her ends, could urge to prevail on her to do so ; and at last consented not to the execution, without exacting from Miss Flora the most solemn vow of an inviolable secrecy.

This project being concluded on, and every thing relating to it settled while they were dressing, they went together according to their promise to the ladies who expected them, and then accompanied them into the park ;---but as if this was to be a day of surprises to Miss Betsey, she here met with something which gave her, at least, an equal share with that she had received from the letter of Mr. Staple.

They had not gone many yards in the Mall, before they saw three gentlemen coming towards them ; one of whom, as they drew nearer to each other, Miss Betsey and Miss Flora presently knew to be the son of alderman Saving, though he was grown fatter, more ruddy, and in many respects much altered.

tered from what he was when he visited at Mr. Goodman's.

As our young ladies had not heard of this gentleman's return to England, it was natural for them, especially Miss Betsy, after what had passed between them, to be in some little surprise at the sudden sight of him ;---he was in some confusion too ; but both parties had presence enough of mind to recover themselves, so as to salute as persons would do, who never had any thing more than an ordinary acquaintance with each other.

After the civilities common to people, who thus meet by accident, Mr. Saving asked the ladies leave for himself and friends to join company ; which being readily granted, they all walked up the Mall together ;---but the place being pretty full, were obliged to divide themselves, and walk in couples, or as it happened. During this promenade, Mr. Saving found an opportunity of saying to Miss Betsy, unheard by any of the others, " madam, I have something to acquaint you with, of great consequence to yourself : --it is improper for me either to come or write to you at Mr. Goodman's, therefore wish you would appoint some place where I might speak to you."

Miss Betsy was very much startled at his mentioning such a thing, and replied, --- " No," Mr. Saving, I do not make a practice of consenting to assignations with men, nor have yet forgot that which I consented to with you.---" I am very well able to clear myself of any fault on that score." said he, " but, madam, to ease you of those apprehensions, which might, perhaps, make you think yourself obliged to keep me at a distance, it is proper to acquaint you, that I am married, and that it is only through a friendly regard for your honour and peace, that I would warn you against the perfidy of a pre- tended

“tended friend.”---Perceiving she started at these words, and repeated them two or three times over, “Yes, madam,” resumed he, and if you will permit me to speak to you in a proper place, will bring with me an unquestionable proof of the truth of what I say.”

One of the ladies happening to turn back to say something to Miss Betsy, prevented him from adding further ; but what he had already spoke, made a very deep impresson on her mind ;---she could not conceive, who the false friend should be, that he had mentioned, unless it were Miss Flora ; but though she had seen many instances of her insincerity, was not able to form any conjecture, what she could have been guilty of to her, that Mr. Saving, who had been so long absent, could possibly be made acquainted with.

Thinking, however, that she ought not to deny herself the satisfaction of the eclairsissement he offered, especially as it was now to be given, not by a lover, but a friend, she sought and found a moment before they left the Mall, of saying to him without the notice of the company, “Sir, I have considered on the hint you gave me ;---whatever concerns my honour, or my peace, must certainly merit my attention :---I have an acquaintance in St. James’s palace, whom I will visit as soon as dinner is over ; if you walk a turn or two in the gallery leading to the chapel-royal, you will see me pass that way between four and five o’clock.” To this Mr. Saving replied, that he would not fail to attend her there.

Miss Flora, who had been informed by Miss Betsy, after they had parted from Mr. Saving, that he was married, was very full of the news when she came home, but Mr. Goodman, to whom the whole story of that affair had been related by the alderman, said, that the young gentleman had done
very

very wisely, in complying with the commands of his father; and added, that the lady had a very agreeable person, a large fortune, and, above all, was extremely modest and discreet; so that there was no room to doubt his happiness.--- There was some further discourse at table, concerning this new-wedded pair; but Miss Betsy took little share in it, as giving herself no pain for the interests of a person for whom she never had any thing but the most perfect indifference.

She was, notwithstanding, impatient enough for the account, she expected to receive from him, and without saying one word, either to miss Flora, or any of the family, where she was going, went at the time prefixed to the place she had appointed to meet him.

Mr. Saving, to avoid being accused of want of punctuality in the affairs of friendship, as he had been in those of love, came somewhat before his time into the palace.---As she ascended the great stairs she saw him looking through one of the windows, waiting her approach, which greatly pleased her, as she would not have thought it proper to have walked there alone, nor would have been willing to have departed without the gratification of that curiosity his words had excited in her.

Excepting the time of divine service, and when the king, or any of the royal family go to chapel, few places are more retired than this gallery, none, besides the officers of the household passing on business into some of the apartments, scarce ever going into it, so that the choice Miss Betsy made, in her appointment with Mr. Saving, was extremely judicious.

As the business on which they met was of a nature very different from love and gallantry, and time was precious to them both, they needed not many compliments to usher in what Mr. Saving had to say :

say :---he only, to excuse his behaviour to her, while he had professed himself her lover, was beginning to relate the sudden manner in which he had been forced abroad ; but she stopped him from going on, by telling him, she had heard the whole story of that affair from Mr. Goodman, to whom the alderman had made no secret of it.

“ I have only then,” said he, “ to acquaint you, madam, that soon after my arrival in Holland, looking over some papers, that my father had put into my portmantua for my instruction in the business I was sent to negotiate, I found among them a letter, which, doubtless, in the hurry he was in, he had shuffled with the others through mistake ;---which, pray madam,” continued he, giving her a paper, “ be pleased to peruse, and tell me whether honour and justice did not oblige me to take the first opportunity of cautioning you against the baseness and malice of a person, you might otherwise, perhaps, confide in, on matters of more consequence to your peace, than any thing on my account could be.”

Miss Betsey had no sooner taken the paper, and looked on the superscription, which was to alderman Saving, than she cried out, with great amazement, “ Bless me !---this is Miss Flora’s hand.”---“ I think,” said Mr. Saving, “ that I might safely venture to affirm it upon oath, having often seen her writing, and have even some of it at this instant by me, in a song she copied for me, on my first acquaintance with her ;---but read, madam,” pursued he, “ read the wicked scroll, and see the methods she took to prevail on a father to banish from his presence, and the kingdom, an only son, and to traduce that innocence and virtue which she hated, because incapable of imitating.”

On

On this, Miss Betsey trembling, between a mixture of surprize and anger, hastily unfolded the letter, and found in it these lines, wrote in the same hand with the superscription.

“ Sir,

“ **T**HE real esteem I have for all persons of
 “ honesty and probity, obliges me to give
 “ you this seasonable warning of the greatest mis-
 “ fortune that can possibly befall a careful and a
 “ tender parent, as I know you are ; —but not to
 “ keep you in suspense,---your son, Sir, — your
 “ only,---your darling son !---that son, whom you
 “ have educated with so much tenderness, and who
 “ is so deservedly dear to you, is on the verge of
 “ ruin :---his unhappy acquaintance with Mr. Good-
 “ man’s family has subjected him to the artifices of
 “ a young girl, whose little affairs are in the hands
 “ of that gentleman.---She is a great coquette,---
 “ if I had said, jilt too, I believe the injustice I
 “ should have done her character would not have
 “ been much ; but as her share, either of fortune
 “ or reputation, is very small, I cannot condemn
 “ her for putting in practice all the stratagems in
 “ her power of securing to herself a future settle-
 “ ment by marriage,---I should, Sir, only be sorry
 “ that the lot should fall upon your son, as I know,
 “ and the world acknowledges him to be a gentle-
 “ man of much more promising expectations.---It
 “ is, however, a thing I fear too near concluded ;
 “ ---he loves her to distraction,---will venture every
 “ thing for the gratification of his passion :--- She
 “ has a great deal of cunning, though little under-
 “ standing in things more becoming of her sex ;---
 “ she is gay, vain, and passionately fond of gaming,
 “ and all the expensive diversions of the town.---
 “ A shocking, and most terrible composition for
 “ a wife ! yet such will she very speedily be made
 “ by

“ by the poor infatuated Mr. Saving, if you, Sir,
 “ in your paternal wisdom do not find some way
 “ to put a stop to his intentions.--- The original
 “ of the picture I have been representing is called
 “ Miss Betsey Thoughtless, a name well known a-
 “ mong the gallant part of the town. I hope you
 “ will take the above intelligence in good part, as
 “ it is meant,

“ With the greatest sincerity, and
 “ Attachment to your interests,

“ By, sir,

“ Your most humble,

“ But unknown servant,

“ A. Z.

“ P. S. Sir, your son is every day at Mr. Good-
 “ man’s, and if you will take the trouble to
 “ set a watch over him, or send any person to
 “ enquire in the neighbourhood, it will be easy
 “ for you to satisfy yourself in the truth of what
 “ I have related.”

The consternation Miss Betsey was in, on reading this cruel invective, was such, as for some moments deprived her from the power of speaking.---Mr. Saving could neither wonder at, nor blame so just a resentment, yet to mitigate it in part, he confessed to her a secret, which, till then, she had been wholly ignorant of.

“ Though nothing, madam,” said he, “ can excuse the crime she has been guilty of towards you, yet permit me to acquaint you, that the malice is chiefly levelled against me, and you are only wounded through my sides.”

“ How can that be ?” cried she, “ she does justice to your character, while she defames mine in the most barbarous manner.”---“ Meer artifice, madam,” answered he, “ to work my
 “ father

“father to her purpose, as I will presently convince
 “you.”

He then told her, that before he ever had the honour of seeing her, he had treated Miss Flora with some gallantries ; “ which,” said he, “ her vanity made her take as the addresses of a serious passion, ’till those she found I afterwards made to you, convinced her to the contrary.---This, madam,” continued he, I am well assured of by her laying hold of every opportunity to reproach my inconstancy, as she termed it:--- finding how little I regarded all she said to me on that score, and still persisted in my devoirs to you, she doubtless had recourse to this most wicked stratagem to cut me from all hope, even though it had been in my power to have inclined you to favour my suit.”

Miss Betsy found this supposition so reasonable, and so conformable to the temper of Miss Flora, that she agreed with Mr. Saving in it.---She did not now wonder at her wishing to be revenged on him, but could not brook with patience the method she took for being so, and said, that if Mr. Goodman did not do her justice on the author of so infamous a libel, she would immediately quit his house, and chuse another guardian.

“ Hold, madam,” said he, “ I must intreat you will give me leave to remind you of the consequences that may possibly attend your taking such a step :---I own with you, that treachery and calumny, such as her’s, cannot be too severely exposed and punished ; but, madam, consider, that in order to do this, the accident which brought the letter into my possession, and the opportunity you have allowed me of presenting it to you, must be made known, the latter of which you may be confident she would not fail to make such representations of, as would
 “ not

“ not only hurt me, both with my father and my
“ wife, but also furnish the malicious world, too
“ apt to judge by appearances, with some pre-
“ tence for casting a blemish on your own repu-
“ tation.”

These remonstrances had some part of the effect they were intended for on the mind of Miss Betsy, yet having an aversion to dissimulation, and not knowing whether she could be able to conceal either her resentment or the cause of it, she cried out hastily, without considering what she said, “ Why then did you let me know the injury done
“ me, since it is improper for me to do any thing,
“ that might extort a reparation ?”

“ I could not, madam,” replied he, “ behold you
“ harbouring a snake in your bosom without warn-
“ ing you of the sting.— I am certain the easing
“ you of my troublesome addresses has been no
“ cause of mortification ; and it was not that you
“ should revenge what she has already done, but
“ to put you upon your guard against any thing she
“ may hereafter attempt to do, that I resolved to
“ take the first opportunity of letting you see what
“ she was capable of.”

Miss Betsy was by this time fully persuaded by his arguments, but could not forbear complaining of the difficulty it would be to her to look, or speak civilly, to sleep in the same bed, or behave in any respect as she had been accustomed, towards so unworthy a creature :---she thanked him, however, for his good intentions to her, and before they parted, promised to follow his advice, if it were only, as she said, in consideration, that to act in a different manner might be a prejudice to his domestic peace.

C H A P. XXVII.

Has very little in it, besides a collection of letters, some of which are much to the purpose, others less so.

MISS Betsy, after having taken leave of Mr. Saving, went to the apartment of her friend, where she stayed supper, not because she was at that time capable of being entertained, either with the elegancies of the table, or the company, which happened to be pretty numerous ; but merely to amuse and recover herself from the shock, which the late discovery of Miss Flora's infidelity had given her.

On her coming home, she found the family not yet gone to bed, though it was then near one o'clock---Mr. Goodman was in high good humour, and said to her, " Miss Betsy you have lost some
 " hours of contentment by being abroad,--- Mr.
 " Truworth has been here, and did us the favour
 " to pass the whole evening with us ; but that is
 " not all,---three letters have been left for you,---
 " two of them came by the post, and are, I
 " know, by the superscription, from Mr. Francis
 " Thoughtless, and lady Trusty :--- the other I
 " am informed was left for you by a porter, but
 " your curiosity must wait for these,---I have
 " still better news for you,---your eldest brother,
 " Mr. Thomas Thoughtless is coming home,---
 " I have received a letter from him, which tells
 " me, he has finished his tour, and we shall soon
 " have him among us.-----See," continued he,
 " what he says."

In speaking these words, he took the letter out of his pocket, and gave her to read :---it contained these lines :

To Mr. GOODMAN.

‘ *Worthy Sir,*

‘ I HAVE been for upwards of a month detained on a party of pleasure, at the chateau of monsieur le marquis de St. Amand, so was not so happy to receive yours of the seventh, and twenty-second instant, till yesterday, when I returned to Paris.—I thank you for the long and particular account you give me of those affairs which are entrusted to your care.—As to what you tell me concerning my brother Frank’s having left the university, I am not sorry for it, nor can at all wonder, that a young fellow of his mettle should be willing to exchange the hopes of a mitre for a truncheon.—I have not heard from him since I left Florence, but believe it owing to his want of knowing where to direct for me, my stages afterwards having been pretty uncertain ; but finding by yours that he is now with Sir Ralph Trusty, shall accompany a letter I am obliged to send to that gentleman, with one to him.—I forgive my sister’s not writing when you did, as you gave me some hints she is likely soon to become a bride :—a matter, I confess, sufficient to engross the whole thoughts of a young lady ; be pleased to assure her, of my good wishes in this, and all other events.—As you say she has two very advantageous offers, I flatter myself, through your good advice and inspection, she will take the best.

‘ In my last, I mentioned somewhat of a design I had, to pass a few months in the southern parts of this kingdom ; but I have since changed my mind, and am determined on returning to my native country with all possible expedition :—I believe you may expect me in three or four weeks

‘ weeks at farthest.—If, Sir, you could within
‘ that time hear of a house, agreeably situated, for
‘ my use, I should esteem it as a considerable addition
‘ to the favours of our family, and myself in
‘ particular, has received from you since the death
‘ of our dear father.—I should approve of St. James’s
‘ Square, if rents are not too exorbitant; for in
‘ that case a house in any of the adjoining streets
‘ must content me:—I would not willingly exceed
‘ an hundred, or an hundred and ten pounds per
‘ annum; but would be as near the park and palace
‘ as possible.

‘ I kiss lady Mellafin’s and her fair daughter’s
‘ hands, and am,

‘ With very great respect,

‘ SIR,

‘ Your most obliged,

‘ And most obedient servant,

‘ T. THOUGHTLESS.

Miss Betsy was very glad to find a brother, who had now been near five years abroad, was at last coming home, and much more so, that he intended to set up housekeeping in London, because, as doubting not he would be pleased to have her with him, she would have a fair pretence for quitting Mr. Goodman’s house, and the society of Miss Flora, who had now rendered herself so irksome to her.

This did not hinder her, however, from reproaching Mr. Goodman for having mentioned to her brother any thing in relation to her lovers, — “ You see, Sir,” said she, “ that one of
“ them has already abandoned me, and you
“ will also see, in a short time, that the other
“ will be little the better for his rival’s resignation.”

To this Mr. Goodman pleasantly replied, that whatever she pretended at present, he believed better things from her good sense, and the merits of Mr. Truworth; to which Miss Betsy, unwilling to prolong the conversation, only told him, he would find himself mistaken, and ran hastily up stairs to examine the contents of those letters, which, she had heard, lay on her toilet, ready for her perusal.—The first she broke open was from Miss Forward, knowing it to be her's by the hand, and eager to see the event of a fate, which, by the history she had given her, had appeared so doubtful.

TO MISS BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

Dear Miss Betsy,

‘ SINCE I saw you I have been driven to the
 ‘ last despair :—the kind supply you left with
 ‘ me was quite exhausted, and I must infallibly
 ‘ have perished, through want of the common ne-
 ‘ cessaries of life, and the cruel usage of my mer-
 ‘ cenary landlady, if my poor aunt in the country
 ‘ had not sent me a small present, which for a
 ‘ small space of time afforded relief, but accom-
 ‘ panied with the melancholy account that my fa-
 ‘ ther was inexorable to her persuasions,—would
 ‘ not hear of my return to L— —e, and vow-
 ‘ ed never to see me more, or own me for his
 ‘ child :—soon was I again reduced to the lowest
 ‘ ebb of misery,——had scarce sufficient to furnish
 ‘ the provisions of another day, and was even
 ‘ threatened to be turned out of doors by the inhu-
 ‘ man hag, who, I very well remember, you said,
 ‘ had her soul pictured in her countenance ; —but,
 ‘ my dear friend, in the midst of this distress, and
 ‘ when I thought no human help was near, my af-
 ‘ fairs took a most sudden and unexpected turn.---

“ Fortune

‘ Fortune threw in my way a kinsman of my mother’s, — whom I had never seen, nor even heard of before ; — he compassionated my calamitous condition, — removed me from that dismal place, — allows me a handsome maintenance, and has promised to continue it, till nature, and the endeavours of my good aunt, shall work my father to a more gentle temper.

‘ I long to see you, and would have waited on you to return the money you were so kind to lend me, but knew not whether it were proper for me to do so, as I am wholly unacquainted with the family where you are. — A visit from you would therefore now be doubly agreeable, as I am lodged in a house less unworthy to receive you, than that wretched one to which I before took the liberty to make you an invitation.

‘ You may now find me at Mr. Screener’s, the very next door to Linko’s-Head, in Tavistock-street, in Covent-garden, where, I flatter myself, your good-nature will soon bring you to her, who is impatient for that happiness, and will always be, dear Miss Betsy,

‘ Your very affectionate,

‘ And most humble servant,

‘ A. FORWARD.

• P. S. I had forgot to tell you that I am every Friday engaged at my above-mentioned good-cousin’s, and should never have forgiven myself, if by this omission you had lost your labour, and I the pleasure of your company.’

Miss Betsy, who little doubted the sincerity of this epistle, was very much touched with it, and resolved to comply with the invitation it contained, in a short time. — She now began to grow pretty

sleepy, and would, probably, have deferred the perusal of the other two letters, 'till next morning, if Miss Flora had not come up to go to bed :— to avoid, therefore, entering into any conversation with her, she took up the first that came to hand, and found the contents as follows :

TO MISS BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

My dear sister,

AS Mr. Goodman's endeavours for procuring me a commission have not yet been attended with the desired success, I have been prevailed upon by the solicitations of my friends, to give them my promise of passing some part of the hunting season in L———, so shall not see you so soon as my last might make you expect ;---but I will not dissimble, so far as to tell you, that to give you this information is the chief motive of my writing to you at present ;---no, my dear Betsy ! it is one of much more consequence that now directs my pen,---it is to give you such remonstrances, as, I fear, you stand but in too much need of, to beware how you disregard the smiles of fortune, and become the enemy of your own happiness.---I received a letter yesterday from Mr. Truworth ;---he complains sadly of my staying in the country, and seems to think my presence necessary for the advancement of his courtship to you.---I shall be always glad to be obliged by you on any score, but extremely sorry to find my interests with you, as a brother, should have more effect on you than your own reason, and the merits of one of the most deserving men on earth.---I have no pretence to claim any authority over you by the ties of blood, but may certainly flatter myself with having some influence over you as a friend,---enough at least I hope

‘ hope to prevail on you to consider seriously on
‘ this matter, and am persuaded, that if you once
‘ bring yourself to do so, Mr. Truworth will want
‘ no other advocate to plead his cause, than your
‘ own understanding.---I am willing to believe the
‘ assurance you gave me in your last, of your heart
‘ being free from any impression yet endeavoured
‘ to be made upon it; did I think otherwise I
‘ should be entirely silent on this occasion.---I
‘ would be far, my dear sister, from opposing your
‘ inclinations, I would only wish to direct them
‘ where there is a prospect of the most felicity:---
‘ let me conjure you, therefore, to open your un-
‘ prejudiced eyes, nor be wilfully blind to the good
‘ intended for you by your better stars.---As you
‘ can never expect proposals of more advantage,
‘ than those the love of Mr. Truworth has inclined
‘ him to make you,---I may be pretty confident,
‘ that you have not a friend in the world, who
‘ would not highly condemn your want of giving
‘ due attention to it.---Forgive the warmth with
‘ which I express myself, as it springs from the
‘ sincerest zeal for the establishment of your inte-
‘ rest and happiness, than which nothing is more
‘ at the heart of him, who is,

‘ With the most tender regard,

‘ Dear sister,

‘ Your very affectionate friend,

‘ And brother,

‘ F. THOUGHTLESS.’

While Miss Betsy was reading these letters, Miss
Flora, who immediately followed her into the
chamber, would fain have interrupted her by one
impertinent question or other; but receiving no
answer to any thing she said, gave over speaking,
and went directly to bed, and Miss Betsy breaking
L 4 open

open the third and last letter she had to peruse, found it contained as follows :

TO Miss BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

My dear Miss Betsy,

I HAD wrote to you before, if I had not been prevented by an inflammation in my eyes, which, for some time past, has rendered my pen of no use to me, and I did not chuse to employ an amanuensis in what I have to say to you, but now take the first opportunity, being somewhat better, of giving you that advice, which, it may be reasonably supposed, a person of your years and inexperience of the world may stand in need of, or, if not so, will be of some service in corroborating the good sentiments you are already inspired with.

It was with an extream concern I heard what happened on your account at Oxford, and hope you have so well reflected on the danger you were in, the consequences that attended it, and how much worse might probably have ensued, as to be ever since more circumspect and careful with what company you trust yourself.—I am far from reproaching you with the effects of an accident altogether unforeseen, and impossible to be even guessed at by you, but would beg you to keep always in your mind, that what has been, may some time or other be again, and that repeated inadvertencies may make heaven weary of continuing its protection:—but, my dear Miss Betsy, it is not in my apprehensions of your own conduct, that the greatest part of my fear for you consists;—the world, alas ! and more particularly the place you live in, affords but too many wretches, of both sexes, who make it their business to entrap unwary innocence, and
the

‘ the most fair pretences are often the cover to the
‘ most foul designs :—there are so many daily
‘ instances of the strictest caution not being always
‘ a sufficient security against the snares laid for our
‘ destruction, that I look on it as half a miracle,
‘ when a young woman, handsome, and exposed
‘ as you are, escapes unprejudiced, either in her
‘ virtue or reputation.—Consider, my dear child,
‘ you have no tender mother, whose precepts and
‘ example might keep you steady in the paths of
‘ prudence ;—no father, whose authority might
‘ awe the daring libertine from any injurious attack ;
‘ and are but too much mistress of yourself.—In
‘ fine, thus environed with temptations, I see no
‘ real defence for you but in a good husband.—
‘ I have ever condemned rushing too early into
‘ marriage, and of risking for the sake of one
‘ convenience, the want, perhaps, of a thousand
‘ others ; but when an offer happens to be made,
‘ equally honourable and advantageous, and which
‘ affords an almost assured prospect of every
‘ thing necessary to compleat the happiness of that
‘ state, it cannot be too soon in life accepted.—
‘ I hear with pleasure, that an offer, such as I have
‘ been describing, is now presented to you, and it
‘ would give me an adequate concern to hear that
‘ you had rejected it.—I need not tell you I mean
‘ Mr. Truworth ; for though there may be ma-
‘ ny others who make their addresses to you on the
‘ same score, yet I am entirely ignorant of every
‘ thing relating to them ; but I am well assured,
‘ not only by your brother’s testimony, but by se-
‘ veral gentlemen of this county, that in the for-
‘ tune, person, and amiable qualities of that gen-
‘ tleman are comprised all that you either can, or
‘ ought to wish in a husband :—trifle not then
‘ with a heart so deserving of you ; — scruple not
‘ to become a wife, when merit, such as his, in-

‘vites, and so many reasons concur to urge you to
 ‘consent.—Believe me, there is more true fe-
 ‘licity in the sincere and tender friendship of one
 ‘man of honour, than all the flattering professions
 ‘of a thousand coxcombs. I have much more to
 ‘say to you on this head, but shall defer it, ’till
 ‘you let me know with what kind of sentiments
 ‘it is that you regard the gentleman. I have been
 ‘speaking of, which I beg you will do without
 ‘disguise :—be satisfied that the secret of your
 ‘real inclinations will be as safe in my keeping as
 ‘your own, and that I am,

‘With the most perfect amity,

‘My dear Miss Betsey,

‘Your constant friend,

‘And humble servant,

M. TRUSTY.*

The time of night did not permit Miss Betsey to give these letters all the attention which the writers of them, doubtless, desired she should do ; but she locked them carefully in her cabinet, resolving to consider the purport of them more seriously before she returned any answer.

C H A P. XXVIII.

Serves as a supplement to the former.

THE next morning Miss Flora opened her lips almost as soon as she did her eyes, to talk to Miss Betsey on the design had been agreed upon between them the day before, in relation to Mr. Staple.—She told her, she had employed her whole thoughts about it ever since, and that she had found out a way of introducing the discourse, so as to give him no suspicion that she came from her, yet, at the

the same time, take away all his apprehensions of her being in love with Mr. Truworth; and added, that she would go to his lodgings immediately after breakfast.

“Indeed,” replied Miss Betsy, sullenly, “you shall do no such thing;—I do not care what his apprehensions are, or any one’s else;—the men may all think and do as they will,—I shall not fill my mind with any stuff about them.”——
“Heyday,” cried Miss Flora, a good deal shocked at this sudden turn, “what whim has got possession of you now?” The whim you endeavoured to possess me with,” said Miss Betsy, scornfully, “would have been a very ridiculous one I am sure;—but I have considered better on it, and despise such foolish fancies.”—Good-lack,” returned the other, “you are grown wondrous wise methinks,—at least imagine yourself so;—but I shall go to Mr. Staple for all this,—I cannot bear that he should think you are in love with Truworth.”—I know no business,” said Miss Betsy, in a haughty tone, “you have either with my love or hate, and I desire for the future, you will forbear troubling your head in my affairs.”

Miss Flora then told her, that what she had offered was merely in regard to her reputation, and then ran over again all the arguments she had urged, in order to prevail on her to come into the measures she proposed; but whatever she said, either in the wheedling or remonstrating accent, was equally ineffectual, the other remained firm in her resolution, and behaved in a manner so different from what Miss Flora had ever seen her do before, that she knew not what to think of it.—Having her own reasons, however, to bring her, if possible, to a less grave way of thinking, she omitted nothing in the power of artifice, that she imagined might

might be conducive to that end.---All the time they were rising,—all the time they were dressing, did she continue to labour on this score, without being able to obtain any other answers to what she said, than such as were peremptorily in the negative.

It is certain, that Miss Betsey was of so soft and tractable a disposition, that half the arguments Miss Flora had alledged, would, at another time, have won her to consent to things of much greater consequence than this appeared to be; but the discovery she had the day before made of her deceit, and the little good-will she had towards her, gave her sufficient reason to apprehend, that she had some further designs than she pretended in this project, though of what nature it could be was not in her power to conceive.---The thing in dispute seemed to her extremely trifling in itself, but the eagerness with which she was pressed to it, by a person of whose treachery she had so flagrant a proof, convinced her, that she ought not on any account to acquiesce.

Miss Flora, on the other hand, was disconcerted beyond measure at this unexpected change in Miss Betsey's humour, of which she was as little able to divine the cause, as the other was to guess the design she had formed; but determining to accomplish her point, if possible, at any rate, she endeavoured all she could to dissemble her chagrin, and still affected a mighty regard for the honour of Miss Betsey, telling her, she was resolved to serve her whether she would or not, and that how much soever she disapproved it, she should pursue her first intention, and undeceive Mr. Staple in the opinion he had, of her being so silly as to fall in love with Mr. Truworth.

Miss Betsey on hearing this, and not doubting but she would do as she had said, turned towards her, and looking full upon her with a countenance composed

composed enough, but which had yet in it somewhat between the ironical and severe, replied in these terms,---“ Since you are so much bent,” said she, “ on making a visit to Mr. Staple, far be it from me, Miss Flora, to deprive that gentleman of the favour you intend him, provided you give me your promise, in the presence of Mr. Goodman, and he will be your security for the performance of it, that you will mention neither my name, nor that of Mr. Truworth, and above all, that you will not pretend to have any knowledge of affairs you never have been trusted with.”

However inconsiderate, or incautious, Miss Betsy may appear to the reader, as to her conduct in general, it must be acknowledged, that at this time she shewed an uncommon presence of mind.—— This was, indeed, the only way to put a stop, and quash at once that scheme, which her false friend had formed to do her a real prejudice, under the pretence of serving her.

It is not in words to express the confusion Miss Flora was in, on hearing Miss Betsy speak in this manner.——Bold as she was by nature, and habituated to repartee, she had not now the power of uttering one word: innocence itself, when overawed by authority, could not have stood more daunted and abashed, while the other, with a careless air, added, “ As soon as we go down stairs I shall speak to Mr. Goodman about this matter.”

Whether Miss Betsy really intended to put this menace in execution, or not, is uncertain; for Miss Flora recovering her spirits, and her cunning at the same time, affected to burst into a violent fit of laughter. “ Mr. Goodman!” said she; “ mighty pretty, indeed!——you would trouble Mr. Goodman with the little impertinences we
“ talk

“ talk on between ourselves ! but do so if you
 “ think proper.—I shall tell him the truth, that
 “ I made this proposal to you only to try you, and
 “ but acted the second part of what Mr. Chatfree
 “ had begun.—You did not imagine sure, “ con-
 “ tinued she with a malicious sneer, “ that I loved
 “ you so well, that for your sake I would hazard
 “ my person and reputation, by going to see a
 “ young gay fellow at his own lodgings.”

“ As for that,” cried Miss Betsy, with a look
 as contemptuous as she could possibly assume, “ I
 “ am equally well acquainted with the modesty
 “ and sincerity of Miss Flora, and know how to
 “ set a just value upon both.”—In speaking these
 words, having now got on her cloaths, she flung
 out of the room without staying to hear what an-
 swer the other would have made.

After this these two high spirits had little inter-
 course, never speaking to each other, but on such
 common affairs as were unavoidable between per-
 sons who lived in the same house, eat at the same
 table, and lay in the same bed.—How Miss Flora
 employed her thoughts will very shortly be seen,
 but we must first examine what effect these late oc-
 currences had on the mind of Miss Betsy.

Young as she was, she might be said to have
 seen a great deal of the world ; and as she had a fine
 understanding, and a very just notion of things,
 wanted only to reflect on the many follies and de-
 ceits which some of those who call themselves the
 beau monde are guilty of, to be enabled to dispise
 them.—The last letter she had received from
 lady Trusty made a strong impression on her, and
 casting a retrospect on several past transactions she
 had been witness of, as well as those she had been
 concerned in herself, began to wonder at, and
 condemn the vanity of being pleased with such sha-
 dowing nothings :—such fleeting, unsubstantial
 delights,

delights, accompanied with noise and hurry in the possession, and attended with weariness and vexation of spirit.—A multiplicity of admirers seemed now to her among this number ;—her soul confessed, that to encourage the addresses of a sop, was both dangerous and silly ; and to flatter with vain hopes the sincere passion of a man of honour, was equally ungenerous and cruel.

These considerations were very favourable to Mr. Truworth ;—she ran through every particular of that gentleman's character and behaviour, and could find nothing which could make her stand excused even to herself, for continuing to treat him with the little seriousness she had hitherto done.

“ What then shall I do with him ?” said she to herself. “ Must I at once discard him, — desire him to desist his visits, and tell him I am determined never to be his ! — or must I resolve to think of marrying him, and henceforward entertain him, as the man who is really ordained to be one day my husband ! — I have at present rather an aversion, than an inclination to a wedded state ; yet if my mind should alter in this point, where shall I find a partner so qualified to make me happy in it ? — but yet,” continued she, “ to become a matron at my years, is what I cannot brook the thoughts of ; — if he loves me he must wait, — it will be sufficient to receive the addresses of no other ; but then how shall I refuse those who may make an offer of them, without giving the world room to believe I am pre-engaged.”

Thus did she argue with herself, — the dilemma appeared hard to her, but what was the result of her reasonings will best appear in the answer she sent to lady Trusty's letter, which was in the following terms :

To Lady TRUSTY.

‘ *Madam,*

‘ I Received the honour of yours, and sincerely
‘ I thank you for the good wishes and advice con-
‘ tained in it : be assured, madam, I have a just
‘ sense of the value I ought to set upon them, and
‘ shall henceforth do the utmost in my power to
‘ deserve it.—I have, indeed, no parent to direct,
‘ and but few faithful friends to guide me through
‘ the perplexing labyrinth of life.—I confess, I
‘ have been too often misled by the prevalence of
‘ example, and my own idle caprice,—it is there-
‘ fore the highest charity to shew me to myself.
‘ —I now see, and am ashamed of the many inad-
‘ vertencies I have been guilty of.—The dangers
‘ which a young woman, like me, must necessarily
‘ be continually exposed to, appear to me, from
‘ what you say of them, in their proper colours,
‘ and convince me, that no person of understanding
‘ would condemn me, if to avoid so many threaten-
‘ ed ills, I flew to that asylum your ladyship has
‘ mentioned.—I will own to you yet farther,
‘ madam, that I am not insensible of the merits of
‘ Mr. Truworth, nor of the advantages, which
‘ would attend my acceptance of his proposals ; but
‘ I know not how it is, I cannot all at once bring
‘ myself into a liking of the marriage state.—Be
‘ assured of this, that I never yet have seen any
‘ man, whom my heart has been more inclined to
‘ favour, and that, at present, I neither receive,
‘ nor desire the addresses of any other.—There
‘ is no answering for events, but, in the way of
‘ thinking I now am, it seems not improbable, that
‘ I shall one day comply with what my friends take
‘ so much pains in perswading me to.—In the
‘ mean time, I beseech you to believe I shall regu-
‘ late

‘ late my conduct, so as to ease you of all those
‘ apprehensions you are so good to entertain on my
‘ account.—I am,

‘ With a profound respect,

‘ MADAM,

‘ Your ladyship’s most obliged,

‘ And most devoted servant,

E. THOUGHTLESS.’

Miss Betsy also answered her brother’s letter at the same time; but the purport of it being much the same with that she wrote to lady Trufty, there is no occasion for inserting it.

C H A P. XXIX.

Seems to bring things pretty near a conclusion.

MISS Betsy was now in as happy a disposition as any of her friends, or even Mr. Trueworth himself could desire;—she listened to the confirmations he was every day giving her of his passion, with the greatest affability, and much more seriousness and attention, than she had been accustomed.—The quarrel she had with Miss Flora making her willing to avoid her as much as possible, he was frequently alone with her whole hours together, and had all the opportunities he could wish of cultivating the esteem, she made no scruple of confessing she had for him.—As Mr. Staple was now gone out of town, pursuant to the resolution he had taken, and no other rival, at least none encouraged by Miss Betsy, had as yet seconded him, he had all the reason in the world to flatter himself, that the accomplishment of his wishes were not far distant.

Plays, — operas. — and masquerades, were now beginning to come in vogue, and he had the satisfaction to see his mistress refuse whatever tickets were

were offered her for those diversions, by any of the gentlemen who visited lady Mellasin, and at the same time readily agreed to accompany him to these, or any other public entertainments, whenever he requested that favour of her.

Miss Betsey's behaviour in this point, however had more the air, than the reality of kindness to Mr. Truworth; for in effect it was not because she would not accept of tickets from any other person than himself, but because they were offered by gentlemen of lady Mellasin's acquaintance, and consequently, in respect to her, Miss Flora had the same share in the invitation, with whom she was determined never more to be seen abroad.

This required some sort of contrivance, to be managed in such a manner as to give no umbrage to Mr. Goodman, or lady Mellasin, for the former of whom she had always a very great esteem, and did not chuse to afford the latter any cause of complaint against her, while she continued to live in the same house.—The method she took therefore to avoid a thing so disagreeable to her, and at the same time to give no occasion of offence, was always to make choice of one diversion, when she knew Miss Flora was pre-engaged to another.

To partake of these pleasures, which Mr. Truworth, seeing into her temper, was almost every day presenting, she invited sometimes one lady, sometimes another of those she conversed with; but the person who most frequently accompanied her, was Miss Mabel, a young lady, who lived in the next street, and whom she had been acquainted with ever since her coming to London, but had not been altogether so agreeable to her, as she really deserved, and otherwise would have been, if lady Mellasin and Miss Flora had not represented her as a prying, censorious, ill-natured creature, and, in fine, given her all the epithets which compose the character of a prude.

She

She was, indeed, both in principles and behaviour the very reverse of Miss Flora ;—she was modest without affectation, — reserved without austerity, — cheerful without levity, — compassionate and benevolent in her nature, — and, to crown all, was perfectly sincere : — Miss Betsy had never wanted penetration enough to see, and to admire the amiable qualities of this young lady, nor had been at all influenced by the character given of her by lady Mellasin and Miss Flora, — but being herself of too gay and volatile a temper, the more serious deportment of the other gave somewhat of a check to her's, and for that reason rendered her society less coveted by her. — The letter of lady Trufty, however, joined to the late accidents which had happened, having now given her a turn of mind vastly different from what it had been a very little time before, made her now prefer the conversation of Miss Mabel, to most others of her acquaintance.

This young lady having been often in Mr. Truworth's company, with Miss Betsy, saw enough into him to be assured the passion he professed for her was perfectly honourable and sincere ; and as she had a real affection for her fair friend, and thought it a match greatly to her advantage, was perpetually remonstrating to her, that she could not treat with too much complaisance, a lover so every way deserving of her.

It is certain, that what she said on this score, had some weight with Miss Betsy ; Mr. Goodman also was every day admonishing her in behalf of Mr. Truworth, as he thought it his duty to do, both as her guardian and her friend. — In fine, never was a heart more beset, — more forced, as it were, into tender sentiments than that of this young lady : — first by the merits and assiduities of the passionate invader, and next by the persuasions of all those, who she had any reason to believe had her interest

interest in view, and wished to see her happiness established.

Enemy as she was by nature to serious reflection, on any account, much more on that of marriage, every thing now contributed to compel her to it; she could not avoid seeing and confessing within herself, that if ever she became a wife, the title could not be attended with more felicity, than when conferred on her by a person of Mr. Truworth's fortune, character, and disposition.

She was one day alone, and in a very considerative mood, when a letter was brought to her, which she was told came by the penny post; as she was not accustomed to receive any by that carriage, it pretty much surprised her, but much more so, when having hastily opened it, she found the contents as follow :

To Miss BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

‘ *Madam,*

‘ **I**T is with an inexpressible concern, that I relate
 ‘ to you a thing, which I am but too sensible
 ‘ will give you some disquiet, nor could have pre-
 ‘ vailed with myself on any terms to have done it,
 ‘ were it not to preserve you from falling into much
 ‘ greater afflictions than the discovery I am about to
 ‘ make, can possibly inflict :——but not to keep
 ‘ you in suspense,——you are courted by a gen-
 ‘ tleman whose name is Truworth ;——he is re-
 ‘ commended by your brother, who, alas ! knows
 ‘ him much less than he imagines :——he has in-
 ‘ deed a large estate, and does not want accom-
 ‘ plishments to endear him to the fair sex,——I
 ‘ wish he had as much intrinsic honour and since-
 ‘ rity to deserve, as he has personal endowments
 ‘ to acquire, the favours so lavishly bestowed upon
 ‘ him.——I hope, however, you have not been so
 ‘ much deceived by the innocence of your own
 ‘ heart,

‘ heart, and the fancied integrity of his, as to be so
‘ distractedly in love with him, as he has the vanity
‘ to boast, and your companion and supposed friend,
‘ Miss Mabel, reports you are :——if his designs
‘ upon you are such as they ought to be, he is at
‘ least ashamed to confess they are so ; and the lady
‘ I just mentioned, whispers it in all companies,
‘ that a marriage with you is of all things in the
‘ world the farthest from his thoughts ——He
‘ plainly says, that he but trifles with you, ’till
‘ your brothers come to town, and will then find
‘ some pretence to break entirely with you,——
‘ perhaps, on the score of fortune ; but of that I
‘ am not positive,——I only repeat some part of
‘ those unhandsome expressions his unworthy tongue
‘ has uttered.

‘ But, madam, as I have given you this intelli-
‘ gence, so I think it my duty to offer you some
‘ advice for your behaviour, in so nice and critical
‘ a juncture.——As he threatens to abandon you
‘ on the arrival of your brothers, I should think,
‘ that if you forbid him your presence, ’till that
‘ time, it would not only be a sure touchstone of
‘ his affection, but also be a means of clearing your
‘ reputation from those blemishes it has received on
‘ his account.——After what I have said, I believe
‘ it would be needless to add, that the less freely
‘ you converse with Miss Mabel, the less you will
‘ suffer, both in the judgment of the world, and
‘ your own future peace of mind.

‘ Slight not this counsel, because given behind
‘ the curtain, but be assured it comes from one,
‘ who is,

‘ With the sincerest attachment,

‘ MADAM,

‘ Your most humble

‘ Though concealed servant.’

If

If Miss Betsey had received this letter a very small time before she did, it might probably have wrought on her all the effect it was intended for ; but she had scarce read it half through, before the lucky discovery of Miss Flora's baseness, so seasonably made to her by Mr. Saving, came fresh into her mind, and she was at no loss to guess at the malicious purpose, and the author of it, though wrote in a hand altogether a stranger to her.

She doubted not but it was a trick of Miss Flora's, to cause a separation between her and Mr. Truworth ; but the motives, which had instigated her to do this, were not in her power to conceive.

"Revenge for her disappointed expectations," said she to herself, "might make her take the steps she did, on Mr. Saving's account ; but what has Mr. Truworth done to her ?——He never pretended love to her,——he neither flattered, or deceived her vanity,---it must be therefore only a wicked propensity,---an envious,---unsocial disposition,---a love of mischief implanted in her nature, and uncorrected by reason or principle, that has induced her to be guilty of this poor,---low, enervate spight ; but I am resolved to mortify it."

She was not long considering in what manner she should proceed, to do as she had said, and, I believe the reader will acknowledge, she hit upon one, as effectual for that end as could have been contrived.

She appeared extremely gay the whole time of dinner, and as soon as it was over, "I will present you with a desert, Sir," said she to Mr. Goodman : "I'll shew you what pains has been taken to break off my acquaintance with Mr. Truworth, by some wretch, who either envies me the honour of his affections, or him the place they imagine he has in mine ; but, I beseech you, read
"it,"

“ it,” continued she, “ and I will appeal to you, lady Mellasin, and Miss Flora, if ever there was a more stupid plot.”

“ Stupid enough, indeed,” cried the honest merchant, as soon as he had done reading, “ but it is yet more base.—I am glad, however,” continued he, “ to find your good sense prevents you from being imposed upon by such artifices.” —“ This is so shallow a one,” answered she, “ that a very small share of understanding might serve to defend any one from being deceived by it.—I pity the weakness, while I despise the baseness of such mean incendiaries ;— Mr. Truworth, however, will fare the better for this attempt against him ; I will now make no scruple of preferring him to all mankind besides, ---and perhaps, when my brothers arrive, shall consent to every thing he desires.”

Lady Mellasin could not help applauding the spirit and resolution she shewed on this occasion, and Mr. Goodman was quite charmed with it ; and both of them joined in the severest exclamations against the folly and wickedness of the letter-writer ; but Miss Flora said little, and as soon as she could quit the table with decency, went up into her chamber, saying, she had a piece of work in hand, which she was in haste to finish.

If Miss Betsy had wanted any confirmation of the truth of her suspicions, the looks of Miss Flora, during this whole discourse, would have removed all doubt in her, and the opportunity of venting the spleen she had so justly conceived against her, without seeming to do so, gave her a most exquisite satisfaction.

C H A P. XXX.

Is the better for being short.

MISS Flora retired to her chamber, indeed, not to employ herself in the manner she pretended, but to give a loose to passions more inordinate and outrageous, than it would naturally be believed could have taken possession of so young a heart.

But it is now high time to let the reader see into the secret springs, which set her wicked wit in motion, and induced her to act in the manner she had done.

Through the whole course of the preceding pages, many hints have been given, that the inclinations of this young lady were far from being unblameable, and it will not seem strange, that a person of the disposition she has all along testified, should envy and malign those charms she every day saw so much extolled, and preferred above her own; but we do not ordinarily find one, who all gay and free, like her, and who various times, and for various objects, had experienced those emotions which we call love, should, all at once, be inspired with a passion no less serious, than it was violent, for a person, who never made the least addresses to her on that account.

Yet so in effect it was:—Mr. Truworth had been but a very few times in her company, before she began to entertain desires for her fair friend.—Whenever she had an opportunity of speaking to him alone, she made him many advances, which he either did not, or would not interpret in the sense she meant them.—This coldness, instead of abating, but the more inflamed her wishes, and looking on the passion he had for Miss Betsy, as the only impediment to the gratification of her inclinations,

tions, the curst his constancy, and the beauties which excited it.— So true is that observation of Mr. Dryden,

- ‘ Love ! various minds docs variously inspire ;
- ‘ He stirs in gentle natures gentle fires,
- ‘ Like that of incense on the altar laid ;
- ‘ But raging flames tempestuous souls invade.
- ‘ A fire which ev’ry windy passion blows,
- ‘ With pride it mounts, and with revenge it
‘ glows.’

Miss Flora was not of a temper, either to bear the pangs of hopeless love, in silent grief, or to give way too readily to despair.— In spite of the indifference she found herself treated with by Mr. Truworth, she was not without hope, that if she could by any means occasion a disunion between him and Miss Betsy, he would then be brought to cast his eyes on her, and return her flame with some degree of ardency.

It was for this end she had taken so much pains in endeavouring to persuade Miss Betsy, either to write, or suffer her to go to Mr. Staple, in order, as she pretended, to undeceive that gentleman in his opinion, that she was in love with Mr. Truworth; but her intentions, in reality, were to make him believe, that he himself was the favoured person, and had much the advantage over his rival in the affections of his mistress.— This she doubted not would make him quit his resolution of going into the country, and encourage him to renew his courtship with the same fervency as ever.— The pride she knew Miss Betsy took in a multiplicity of lovers, and the equality with which she had carried herself between him and Mr. Truworth, and which probably she would continue, seemed to afford her a fair prospect of giving Mr. Truworth so much cause of discontent, as to make him break off with a woman, who after what had pas-

sed made no distinction between him and the person he had twice vanquished in the field.—She knew it would, at least, create a good deal of perplexity among them, and delay, if not totally prevent, the completion of what she so much dreaded.

But this scheme being rendered abortive, by the seasonable discovery Miss Betsey had made of her perfidiousness, she set her wits to work for some other new invention, and believing that Miss Betsey's pride would immediately take fire on the least suspicion of any insult being offered, either to her beauty or reputation, procured an agent to write the above inserted letter,—the effect of which has been already shewn.

This disappointment was the more grievous to her, as she had so little expected it :—she broke the sticks of her fan, tore every thing that came in her way,—flew about the room, like a princess in a tragedy ;—wanting the means of venting the rage she was possessed of in great things, she exercised it in small.—A fine petticoat of Miss Betsey's happening to hang on the back of a chair, she threw a standish of ink upon it, as if by accident ; and it is no breach of charity to believe, would have served the owner in a much worse manner, if her power had been equal to her will, and she could have done it without danger to herself.

To add to the fury and distraction of her mind, continuing still in her chamber, and happening to be pretty near the window, she saw Miss Betsey, Miss Mabel, and Mr. Trucworth pass by in a landau, that gentleman having, it seems, invited these ladies on a party of pleasure :—“ You shall not long enjoy this satisfaction,” cried she to herself, “ if it be in human wit to separate you ; ”—but at this sight, the turbulent passions of her soul becoming more outrageous, “ O may the machine
“ that

“ that conveys you be thrown from off its wheels!” pursued she : “ May the wine you drink be poisoned !—May the first morsel you attempt to swallow, mistake its way, and choak you in the passage !”

Thus did she rave, not like one possessed with seven, but seven thousand fiends, and had perhaps remained in this wild way till her brain had been absolutely turned, if lady Mellasin, having a great deal of company, had not positively commanded her to come down, after having sent several times in more mild terms, to let her know what friends were there.

It was some days before the unhappy, and more wicked, Miss Flora, could recollect her scattered senses, enough for the contrivance of any further mischief ; but those evil spirits, to which she had yielded but too much the mastery of her heart, and all its faculties, at length inspired her with, and enabled her in the execution of, a design of the most barbarous kind, and which, for a time, she saw successful, even to her most sanguine expectations.

But while she was ruminating on projects, which had neither virtue nor generosity for their patrons, Miss Betsy passed her days in that cheerfulness which is the constant companion of uncorrupted innocence, and a mind uninfluenced by any tempestuous passions ;—but as it is natural, even to the sweetest tempers, to take pleasure in the mortification of those who have endeavoured to injure us without cause given on our parts, she could not forbear being highly diverted to see the pains Miss Flora took to conceal the inward disturbance of her soul :—the awkward excuses she made, for the damage done her petticoat, gave her more satisfaction, than she could have felt vexation for the spoiling the best thing she had in the world.

Miss Mabel, to whom Miss Betsy had imparted

the whole of this affair, was not at all surpris'd at that part of the letter which related to herself, as she had often been inform'd, by several of her acquaintance, of the character given of her by that malicious girl; but neither of these young ladies could be able to imagine, as they suspected not her passion for Mr. Truworth, from what source this pretended enmity to him was derived.

It would certainly have greatly contributed to the happiness of that gentleman, to have known in what manner his mistress had resent'd the injustice had been done him; but Miss Betsey forbore to let him into the secret, as being already sufficiently convinc'd of the sincerity of his affection, and would not put him to the trouble of giving her new proofs of it, by shewing him the ridiculous accusation, anonymously form'd against him.

C H A P. XXXI.

Contains some incidents which will be found equally interesting and entertaining, or the author is very much mistaken.

MR. Truworth had all the reason imaginable from the whole deportment of Miss Betsey towards him, to believe that there wanted little more for the conclusion of his marriage with her, than the arrival of her two brothers; she had often told him, whenever he press'd her on that score, that she would give no definitive answer, till she had received the advice and approbation of the elder Mr. Thoughtless.

That gentleman was now expected in a few days, and Mr. Francis Thoughtless having intelligence of his being on his return, was also preparing to leave L——e, in order to meet him on his first arrival in London; but during this short space of time, some

some events fell out, which put a great damp on the gaiety of those, who had with so much impatience wished for their approach.

Mr. Truworth had an aunt, who besides being the nearest relation he had living, and the only one in London, was extremely respected by him, on account of her great prudence, exemplary virtue, and the tender affection she had always testified for him.

—This good lady thought herself bound by duty, as she was led by love, to make a thorough enquiry into the character of the young person her nephew was about to marry:—she was acquainted with many who had been in company with Miss Betsy, and were witnesses of her behaviour;—she asked the opinion of those among them, whom she looked upon as the most candid, concerning the match now on the carpet, and was extremely troubled to find their answers such, as were no way conformable to the idea Mr. Truworth had endeavoured to inspire her with of his mistress's perfections:---they all, indeed, agreed that she was handsome,---well-shaped,---genteel,---had a great deal of wit, vivacity, and good-humour; but shook their heads when any of those requisites to make the marriage-state agreeable were mentioned.

Poor Miss Betsy, as the reader has had but too much opportunity to observe, was far from setting forth to any advantage, the real good qualities she was possessed of:---on the contrary, the levity of her conduct rather disfigured the native innocence of her mind, and the purity of her intentions; so that, according to the poet,

‘ All saw her spots, but few her brightness
‘ took.’

The old lady not being able to hear any thing concerning her intended niece, but what was greatly to her dissatisfaction, was continually remonstrating to Mr. Truworth, that the want of solidity in

a wife was one of the worst misfortunes that could attend a marriage-state ;---that the external beauties of the person could not atone for the internal defects of the mind ;---that a too great gaiety du cœur, frequently led women into errors without their designing to be guilty of them ; and conjured him to consider well before the irrevocable words, ‘ I take you for better and for worse,’ were past, how ill it would suit, either with his honour, or his peace of mind, if she whom he now wished to make his partner for life should, after she became so, behave in the same manner she now did.

Mr. Truworth listened to what she said, with all the attention she could desire, but was too passionately in love to be much influenced by it :---not that he did not see there were some mistakes in the conduct of Miss Betsy, which he could wish reformed, yet he could not look upon them as so dangerous to her virtue and reputation, and therefore omitted no arguments, which he thought might justify his choice, and clear the accused fair one from all blame, in the eyes of a person, whose approbation he was very desirous of obtaining.

The warmth with which he spake, convinced his aunt, that to oppose his inclinations in this point was only warring with the winds, she desisted from speaking any more against the marriage, and contented herself with telling him, that since he was bent on making Miss Betsy his wife, she should be glad if, at least, he would remove her into the country, and prevent her returning to this town as long as possible.

This last counsel had a great deal of weight with Mr. Truworth ;—he had often wished in his heart, when seeing her, as he often did, encompassed with a crowd of such, whom his good understanding made him despise, that if ever he became
her

her husband, it might be in his power to prevail on her, to break off acquaintance with the greatest part of those she at present conversed with; and now being admitted to entertain her with more freedom and seriousness than ever, he resolved to sound her sentiments on that score, and try to discover how far she could relish the retirements of a country life.

Accordingly, the next visit he made to her, he began to represent in the most pathetic terms he was able, the true felicity that two people, who loved each other, might enjoy when remote from the noise and interruption of a throng of giddy visitors.—“The deity of soft desires,” said he, “flies the confused glare of pomp and public shews;---’tis in the shady bowers, or on the banks of a sweet purling stream, he spreads his downy wings, and wafts ten thousand nameless pleasures on the fond,---the innocent,---and the happy pair.”

He was going on, but she interrupted him with a loud laugh:---“Hold,---hold,” cried she, “was there ever such a romantic description?---I wonder how such silly ideas come into your head?---Shady bowers! and purling streams!---Heavens, how insipid!---Well,” continued she, “you may be the Strephon of the woods, if you think fit; but I shall never envy the happiness of the Cloe that accompanies you in these fine recesses.---What! to be cooped up like a tame dove, only to coo,--- and bill,--- and breed?---O, it would be a delicious life indeed!”

Mr. Truworth now perceived, to his no small vexation, the late seriousness he had observed in Miss Betsy, and which had given him so much satisfaction, was no more than a short-lived interval,---a sudden start of reason and recollection soon dissipated, and that her temper, in reality, was still as light,

as wild, and as inconsiderate as ever.---The ridicule with which she treated what he said, did not, however, hinder him from proceeding in the praise of a country life; but happening to say, that innocence could no where else be so secure, she presently took up the word, and with a disdainful air replied, that innocence in any one, but an idiot, might be secure in any place; to which he retorted, that reason was at sometimes absent, even in those who had the greatest share of it at others.

Many smart repartees passed between them on this subject, in most of which Miss Betsy had the better; but Mr. Truworth, not willing to give up the point, reminded her that Solomon, the most luxuriant, and withal the wisest of men, pronounced, that all the gaieties and magnificence of the earth were vanity and vexation of spirit.---“He did so,” replied she, with a scornful smile; “but it was not till he had enjoyed them all, and was grown past the power of enjoying yet further:---when I am so, ’tis possible I may say the same.”

Mr. Truworth finding she was pretty much stung at some things he had said, and conscious that in this discourse he had in some measure forgot the respect due from a lover to his mistress, would not pursue the topic any farther, but, as artfully as he could, turned the conversation on things more agreeable to Miss Betsy’s way of thinking:---he could not, however, after they had parted, forbear ruminating on the contempt she had shewn of a country life, and was not so easy as the submissiveness of his passion made him affect to be, on taking leave. This was, however, a matter of slight moment to him, when compared with what soon after ensued.

I believe, that from the last letter of Miss Forward

ward to Miss Betsey, the reader may suspect it was not by a kinsman she was maintained ; but it is proper to be more particular on that affair, and shew how that unfortunate creature, finding herself utterly discarded by her father, and abandoned to the utmost distresses, accepted of the offer made her by a rich Jew merchant, of five guineas a week to be his mistress.

But as few women, who have once lost the sense of honour, ever recover it again, but, on the contrary, endeavour to lose all sense of shame also, devote themselves to vice, and act whatever interest or inclination prompts them to ; Miss Forward could not content herself with the embraces, nor allowance of her keeper, but received both the presents and caresses of as many as she had charms to attract.

Sir Basil Loveit was a great favourite with her, and if among such a plurality one might be said to have the preference, it was he : — this young baronet had been intimately acquainted with Mr. Truworth abroad ; — they had travelled together through the greatest part of Italy, and had been separated only by Mr. Truworth's being called home, on account of some family affair. — Sir Basil being but lately arrived, they had not seen each other since, 'till meeting by accident in a coffee-house, they renewed their former friendship. — After the usual compliments, Mr. Truworth proposed passing the evening together : to which Sir Basil replied, that he should be glad of the opportunity, but was engaged to sup with a lady ; but said he, after a pause, 'tis where I can be free, and you shall go with me. — To which the other having consented, Sir Basil told him, as they were going towards the house, that there would be no occasion to use much ceremony ; for it was only to a lady of pleasure he was conducting him ; but added, that she

was a fine girl,---seemed to have been well brought up,---had been but lately come upon the town, and behaved with more modesty than most of her profession.

Mr. Truworth had never any great relish for the conversation of these sort of women, much less now, when his whole heart was taken up with an honourable passion for a person, who, in spite of the little errors of her conduct, he thought deserving of his affections ; yet as he had given his promise, he imagined, that to go back would be too precise, and subject him to the raillery of his less scrupulous friend.

Miss Forward, for it was she to whom this visit was made, received them in a manner, which justified the character Sir Bazil had given of her.—There was, however, a certain air of libertinism, both in her looks and gestures, which would have convinced Mr. Truworth, if he had not been told so before, that she was one of those unhappy creatures, who make traffic of their beauty. The gentlemen had not been there above a quarter of an hour, before a maid-servant came into the room, and told Miss Forward, that a young lady, who said her name was Thoughtless, was at the door in a chair, and desired to see her ;——“ O my dear “ Miss Betsey Thoughtless,” cried she, desire her “ to walk up immediately.”——“ This is lucky,” said Sir Bazil, “ I wanted a companion for my “ friend,—now each man will have his bird.”——“ Hush,” cried Miss Forward, “ I can assure “ you she is virtuous,—take care what you say.”

Mr. Truworth was so much alarmed at hearing the name of Miss Betsey, that being retired to a window, in order to recover himself from the confusion he was in, that he heard not what Miss Forward had said to Sir Bazil :—Miss Betsey presently entering the room, Miss Forward ran to embrace

brace her, saying, "My dear Miss Betsy, how glad am I to see you!—To which the other returned, My dear Miss Forward, how ashamed am I to have been so long absent!—but one foolish thing or other has still prevented my coming."

Sir Basil then saluted her with a great deal of politeness, though with less respect than doubtless he would have done, had he seen her in any other place.—Mr. Truworth, who by this time had resolved in what manner he should act, now turned and advance towards the company,—Miss Betsy on seeing him, cried out, in some surprise, "Mr. 'Truworth! good God! who thought of finding you here?"—"You did not, madam, I dare answer," replied he with a very grave air, "and as I little expected the honour of meeting you here."—O, you are acquainted then, said Sir Basil, laughing, "this is merry enough,—I find we are all right."

Mr. Truworth made no direct answer to this, but endeavoured to assume a gaiety conformable to that of the company he was in:—after some little time being past in discourse on ordinary affairs, Miss Forward took Miss Betsy into the next room to return the money she had been so kind to lend her at Mrs. Nightshade's, and told her, she had much to say to her, but could not be so rude to leave the gentlemen for any long time.-- While they were absent, which indeed was not above half a minute, "This is a delicious girl," said Sir Basil to Mr. Truworth, "i'faith, Charles, you will have the best of the market to-night."---What reply Mr. Truworth would have made is uncertain,---the ladies returned that instant, and the conversation became extremely sprightly, though, on Sir Basil's part, sometimes interspersed with expressions not altogether consistent with that deco-

rum, he would have observed towards women of reputation.

Miss Betsy, far from thinking any ill herself, took every thing as well meant, and replied to whatever was uttered by this gay young gentleman, with a freedom, which, to those who knew her not perfectly, might justly render her liable to censure.--Mr. Truworth would fain have taken some share, if possible, in this conversation, in order to conceal the perplexity of his thoughts, but all his endeavours were ineffectual, and though his words were sometimes gay, the tone with which he spoke them plainly shewed, that his heart was very far from corresponding with his expressions.

Sir Bazil having ordered a handsome supper, Miss Betsy stayed till it was over, and then rose up, and took her leave, saying, she was obliged to go home, and write some letters.—As none of them had any equipage there, a hackney coach was ordered to be called, and Mr. Truworth offering to accompany her, Sir Bazil, on waiting on them downstairs, said to him some merry things on the occasion, which, though Miss Betsy did not comprehend, her lover understood the meaning of but too well for his peace of mind.

C H A P. XXXII.

Is yet more interesting than the former.

ANY one may judge what a heart, possessed of so sincere and honourable a flame, as that of Mr. Truworth's, must feel, to see the beloved object so intimate with a common prostitute; it shall suffice therefore to say, that his anxieties were such as prevented him from being able to recover himself enough to speak to Miss Betsy on that subject, as he would do; he forbore mentioning it at all,

all, and said very little to her on any other, while they were in the coach, and having seen her safe into Mr. Goodman's house, took his leave, and went home, where he passed a night of more vexation than he ever had before experienced.

Fain would he have found some excuse for Miss Betsy's conduct in this point,---fain would he have believed her innocent as she was lovely, but could not tell how to conceive there was a possibility for true virtue to take delight in the company of vice ; but were there even such a thing in nature, the shew of encouraging an infamous action, he knew not how to brook in a woman he intended to make his wife.

He now acknowledged the justice of his aunt's remonstrances ; and by what the levity of Miss Betsy made him at present endure, foresaw what his honour and his peace of mind must hereafter continually endure, if he should once become a husband :---never were thoughts so divided,---so fluctuating as his ;---his good understanding, and jealousy of honour, convinced him, there could be no lasting happiness with a person of Miss Betsy's temper ; but then the passion he had for her, flattered him with the hopes, that as all the faults she was guilty of, sprung rather from want of consideration than design, she might be reasoned out of them, when once he had gained so far upon her affections, as to find he might take the liberty of painting them to her in their proper colours.

He often asked himself the question, whether he could be able to break with her or not ; and finding by the pangs, which the very idea of an utter separation inflicted on him, that he could not, had no other measures to take than to submit with patience,---to appear satisfied with every thing that pleased her, and to contrive all the methods he could, without her perceiving he did so, of stealing,
by

by gentle degrees, into her mind, a dislike of such things as were unbecoming in her.

He had but just rose from a bed, which that night had afforded him but little repose, when he was told Sir Basil Loveit, to whom he had given his directions the day before, was come to wait upon him.---Mr. Truworth was very glad of it, being impatient to undeceive him in the opinion he found he had entertained of Miss Betsey.---They had not been three minutes together before the other gave him an opportunity, by some facetious interrogatories concerning the transactions of the past night, and among the rest, after looking round the room, asked him, how he had disposed of his pretty Betsey? To all which Mr. Truworth replied, with a very serious air, “ Sir Basil, though
 “ I must own there are many appearances to justify
 “ your mistake, yet, I hope, my word and honour will out-balance them.--- I do assure you,
 “ Sir, that lady, whom you think and speak so
 “ lightly of, is a woman of fortune, family, and
 “ reputation.”---“ I am sorry then,” said Sir Basil, very much surprised, “ I treated her in the
 “ manner I did.”---“ My Nancy, indeed,” continued he, meaning Miss Forward, “ told me she
 “ was virtuous, but I did not regard what she said
 “ on that score ;---I know it is a trick among
 “ them to set off one another, to draw in
 “ us men : but prithee, dear Charles, are you in
 “ earnest ?”---Mr. Truworth then, after having made a second asseveration that he was sincere in what he said, proceeded to give him some account of Miss Betsey’s family, circumstances, and manner of life ; adding, that nothing could be more surprising to him, than to have met her in that place ; “ but,” said he, “ she must certainly
 “ be unacquainted with the character of the woman she came to visit.”

“ Such

“Such a thing might possibly happen,” replied Sir Bazil, “and I think you would do well to give her a hint of it.”——Doubtless,” cried the other, “I am bound to do so, first by my own honour, and next by the friendship I have for some of her kindred.”—No farther discourse passed between them on this score, and the remaining time they were together, being taken up on matters altogether foreign to the business of this history, there is no occasion for making any mention of it.

Sir Bazil stayed so long, that when he had taken his leave, it was too late for Mr. Truworth to make a morning visit to Miss Betsy, as he intended to have done, so was obliged to defer it till the afternoon, though since his first acquaintance with her, he never had felt more impatience to see her.

As he had much in his head to say to her, on the subject of the preceding day, he went as soon as he thought dinner was entirely over at Mr. Goodman's, in order to have an opportunity of talking with her, before any other company came in :—she was then in her chamber dressing, but he waited not long before she came down, and appeared more lovely and dazzling in his eyes than ever.—This happened to be the first day of her putting on a very rich, and extremely well-fancied gown, and either because it was more becoming than any of those he had seen her in before, or because of the pleasure ladies of her age and humour generally feel on such occasions, a more than usual brightness shone in her eyes, and was diffused through all her air ; and after having made her some compliments on the elegance of her taste in dress, “I suppose, madam,” said he, “thus set forth, and equipped for conquest, you do not mean to stay at home this evening.”---“No, indeed,” replied she, “I am told there is a new tragedy to be acted
“to-night

“ to night at Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields, and I would
 “ not for the world miss the first night of a new
 “ play.”

On this Mr. Truworth asked if he might have leave to wait upon her there?---“ With all my heart,” answered she, “ none of the gentlemen of my acquaintance know any thing of my going, so could not offer to gallant me, and there is only one lady goes with me.”---“ Miss Mabel, I guess,” cried Mr. Truworth.---No,” answered Miss Betsy, “ she is engaged to the other house to-night, so I sent to desire the favour of that lady, you saw me with last night, to give me her company.”

“ You will have more if you have her’s, I doubt not,” said he; “ but sure, madam, you cannot think of being seen with a woman of her fame, in a place so public as the playhouse.”---Miss Betsy was astonished to hear him speak in this manner, and demanded of him, in somewhat of a haughty tone, what it was he meant? “ First, madam,” resumed Mr. Truworth, “ give me leave to ask you, how long since, and by what accident, your intimacy with this woman commenced?”---Though your interrogatories,” replied she, “ are made in such a fashion, as might well excuse me from answering them, yet for once I may give you the satisfaction you desire: ---Miss Forward and I were together at the boarding-school,---we mutually took a liking to each other, I believe from a parity of humours and inclinations, and since her coming to London have renewed that friendship we began in our more tender years.”

“ Friendships begun in childhood, madam,” answered he with a very grave air, “ ought to be continued or broke off, according as the parties persevere in innocence, or degenerate into vice
 “ and

“ and infamy.---This caution ought to be more peculiarly observed in persons of your sex, as reputation in you once lost, is never to be retrieved.---Remember, madam, what your favourite author Mr. Rowe says on this occasion :
“ In vain with tears the loss she may deplore, }
“ In vain look back to what she was before, }
“ She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more. }

Miss Betsy was so piqued at these remonstrances, that she had scarce patience to contain herself, 'till he had given over speaking. “Goodluck,” cried she, “ how sententious you are grown !---but, I hope, you have not the insolence to imagine I am guilty of any thing that might justly call my reputation in question ?”---No, madam,” replied he, “ far be it from me to suspect you of any thoughts, but such as might become the purity of angels ;---but the more bright you are, the more should we lament to see the native lustre of your mind clouded, and blemished by the faults of others.---Permit me, madam, to tell you, that to continue an intimacy with a woman of Miss Forward’s character, must infallibly draw you into inconveniencies, which you want but to foresee to tremble at.”

“ If you have the affection for me you pretend,” said she, haughtily, “ and could foresee the aversion I have to a censorious temper, it is yourself would have cause to tremble.---I love Miss Forward, and neither know, nor will believe, any ill of her.---Whenever I am convinced, that she is unworthy of my friendship, it must be by her own actions, not by the report of others.---Therefore, Mr. Truworth, if you desire to continue on good terms with me, you must forbear to interfere with what company I keep, nor pretend to prescribe rules for my conduct, at least till you have more right to do so.”

“ I shall

“ I shall never, madam, presume to prescribe,” replied he ; “ but shall always think it my duty to “ advise you, in a matter, which so nearly concerns, not only yourself, but all who have any “ relation to you, either by blood or affection.”--- Though these words, as well as all he had said on this occasion, were uttered in the most respectful accents, yet Miss Betsy was not able to imagine the least contradiction suited with the character of a lover, was offended beyond all measure ;—she frowned,--rose hastily from her chair,---walked about the room in a disordered motion,---told him the nature of the acquaintance between them did not authorise the liberties he took,---that she would not bear it, and desired, that he would either leave her, or change the conversation to somewhat more agreeable.

Mr. Truworth, who as yet had said little, in comparison with what he intended to say on this subject, was so much shocked at the impossibility he found of engaging her attention, that for some time he was incapable of speaking one word.--- During this pause, a servant presented a letter to Miss Betsy.---“ O !” cried she, as soon as she looked on the superscription, “ It is from my dear “ Miss Forward ;---I hope nothing has happened “ to prevent her going with me to the play.”--- She made this exclamation merely to vex Mr. Truworth, and for that purpose, also, read the billet loud enough for him to hear what it contained, which was as follows :

TO MISS BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

“ *My dear Miss Betsy,*
 “ **S**INCE I received your message, I got a
 “ person to secure places for us in the box, so
 “ we need not go till six o'clock ; but I am quite
 alone,

“ alone, and if you are disengaged should be glad
“ you would come directly to her, who is ever,

“ With the most perfect amity,

“ My dear Miss Betsy,

“ Your very much obliged,

“ And humble servant,

“ A. FORWARD.”

“ Bid the messenger,” said Miss Betsy to the servant, “ tell the lady that I will wait upon her this moment,—and then call me a chair.—I must comply with the summons I have just received,” said she, turning to Mr. Truworth, “ so you must excuse my leaving you, for I will not strain your complaisance to accompany me where I am going; but shall be glad to see you when you are in a better humour.”

“ I am ready, madam, to attend you any where,” said Mr. Truworth, even to Miss Forward’s, —and will pass the whole evening with you, if you please, in her apartment;—but, I beseech you, do not think of going to the play with a woman of her class:—do not expose yourself in a place where so many eyes will be upon you:—reflect, for heaven’s sake, what your modesty will suffer, in seeing yourself gazed and pointed at, by those to whom she sells her favours;—and reflect yet farther, what they will judge of you.”——“ You grow scurrilous, sir,” cried she, ready to burst with passion, “ I will hear no more.”——Then running to the door, asked if the chair was come, and being told it was, “ Farewel, sir,” said she, as she was going into it, “ when I want a spy to inspect, or a governor to direct my actions, the choice, perhaps, may fall on you.”

Mr. Truworth, who, at this treatment, was not quite master of himself, retorted, with some warmth,

warmth, and loud enough to be heard by her, as the chairmen were carrying her to the steps of the house, “The choice, madam, perhaps, may not be yours to make.”——With these words he went hastily away, half resolving in his mind never to see her more.

C H A P. XXXIII.

Cannot fail of exciting compassion in some readers, though it may move others to laughter.

THE few remonstrances Miss Betsy would vouchsafe to listen to from Mr. Truworth, had a much greater effect upon her mind, than her pride, and the excessive homage she expected from her lovers, would suffer to make shew of, or than he himself imagined.——She had too much discernment, heedless as she was, not to know he was above any little malicious inuendos ; but, on the contrary, was extremely cautious in regard to the character of whomsoever he spoke ;——she feared therefore he had but too good grounds for the uneasiness he expressed, for her continuing a correspondence with Miss Forward ;——she knew that she had been faulty, and could not be assured she was not still so ; and it was more owing to her impatience to be ascertained of the truth, than to any real resentment she had conceived against Mr. Truworth, that she complied with the invitation of her now suspected friend, and resolved to put the question home to her, concerning her present manner of life, and the means by which she was supported :——she had found her removed from the lowest degree of penury and wretchedness into a state, equal to what she could have been mistress of, had she been re-established in the favour of her father ; and now, for the first time, began to think it strange she

she should be so, from the mere bounty of a distant relation, to whom in her utmost distress she had never applied, nor even once mentioned in the recital of her melancholy history :——“ I will talk “ to her,” said she to herself, “ watch carefully, “ not only the replies she makes to what I say, “ but also her very looks, unperceiving my suspicions, and if I find the least room to believe “ what Mr. Truworth has insinuated, shall pity, “ but will never see her more.”

In this prudent disposition did she enter the lodgings of Miss Forward, but had no opportunity for the execution of her purpose ;——some company, which she herself thought, by their behaviour, to be not of the best sort, happening to be just come before her, and departed not till it was time to go to the play.—Miss Betsy was more than once about to tell Miss Forward, that she had changed her mind, and would not go ; but her complaisance, as having been the person who made the first proposal, as often stopped her mouth.

In fine, they went, but the house being very full, and the fellow, who had been sent to keep places for them, going somewhat too late, they were obliged to content themselves with sitting in the third row.—This, at another time, would have been a matter of some mortification to Miss Betsy ; but in the humour she now was, to shew herself was the least of her care—.Never had she entered any place of publick entertainment with so little satisfaction ; - - Mr. Truworth’s words ran very much in her mind ; ——she had lost no part of them, and though she could not bring herself to approve of the freedom he had taken, yet, in her heart, she could not forbear confessing, that his admonitions testified the most zealous and tender care for her reputation ; and if given by any one, except a lover, would have demanded more of her thanks than her resentment.

But,

But, alas ! those serious considerations were but of short duration :---the brilliant audience,---the musick,---the moving scenes exhibited on the stage, and above all the gallantries, with which herself and Miss Forward were treated, by several gay young gentlemen, who, between the acts, presented them with fruits and sweet-meats, soon dissipated all those reflections, which it was so much her interest to have cherished, and she once more relapsed into her former self.

Towards the end of the play, there were two rakes of distinction, that stuck very close to them, and when it was ended, took the liberty to invite them to sup at a tavern ;---Miss Betsy started at the motion, but was very well pleased to find Miss Forward shewed an equal dislike to it.---“ You “ will give us leave then,” cried one of the gentlemen, “ to guard you safe home, ladies ?” ---- “ That I think, my dear,” said Miss Forward to Miss Betsy, “ may be granted, for the sake of “ being protected from the insults of those, who “ may know less how to behave towards our sex.”

Miss Betsy making no opposition, they all four went in a hackney-coach to Miss Forward’s lodging, it being agreed upon between them, that Miss Betsy should be set down there, and take a chair from thence to Mr. Goodman’s.---Nothing indecent, nor that could be any way shocking to the most strict modesty, being offered during their passage, on their alighting from the coach at Mr. Screener’s door, Miss Forward thought, that to ask them to come in would incur no censure from her fair friend, as they had behaved with so much civility and complaisance ;---accordingly she did so, and they, who expected no less, took each man his lady by the hand, and immediately tript up stairs.

Miss Betsy did not presently make any offer to
go

go home, because she thought it would appear very odd in her to leave her companion, with two strange gentlemen.---She little guessed the designs they had in their heads, and doubted not but they would soon take leave ; --she did not, however, continue in this mistake for many minutes, for one of them drawing Miss Forward to a window, in order to speak to her with more privacy, the other, that he might have the better opportunity to do so, addressed himself to Miss Betsy,—" How killing
" handsome you are," said he, taking her by both her hands, and looking full in her face, " What a
" pity it is you did not shine in the front to-night ?
" By my soul you would have out-dazzled all the
" titled prudes about you."

" Pish," replied she, " I went to see the play,
" not to be seen myself."—" Not to be seen !" cried he, " why then have you taken all this pains
" to empty the whole quiver of Cupid's arrows to
" new point those charms you have received from
" nature?—Why does the jessamine, and the
" blooming violet play wanton in your hair ?—
" Why is the patch with so much art placed on
" the corner of this ruby lip,—and here another
" to mark out the arched symmetry of the jetty
" brown? Why does the glittering solitaire hang
" pendant on the snowy breast, but to attract, and
" allure us poor, admiring men, into a pleasing
" ruin ?"

Miss Betsy answered this raillery in its kind, and as she had a great deal of ready wit, would soon perhaps, had the same strain continued, have left the beau nothing to say for himself ; but Miss Forward, and the other gentleman having finished what they had to say, coming towards them, put an end to it.—" What do you think," cried Miss Forward, " this gentleman swears he won't go out of
" the house, till I give him leave to send for a sup-
" per ?"

“per?”——“You may do as you please,” said Miss Betsey, “but I must be excused from staying to partake of it.”——Whether she was really in earnest or not, is not very material, but her refusal was looked upon only as a feint, and they pressed her to tarry in such a manner, as she could not well avoid complying, even though she had been more averse, in effect, than for some time she pretended to be.

The conversation was extremely lively, and tho’ sprinkled with some double entendres, could not be said to have any thing indecent, or that could raise a blush in the faces of women who were accustomed to much company.---Miss Betsey had her share in all the innocent part of what was said, and laughed at that which was no less so.---But not to dwell on trifles, she forgot all the cautions given her by Mr. Trueworth,---considered not that she was in the company of two strange gentlemen, and of a woman whose character was suspected; nor, though she had a watch by her side, regarded not how the hours passed on, ’till she heard the nightly monitor of time, cry, “Past twelve o’clock, and a cloudy morning.”

After this she would not be prevailed upon to stay, and desired Miss Forward to send somebody for a chair.---“A chair, madam,” cried that gentleman, who, of the two, had been most particular in his addresses to her, “you cannot sure imagine we should suffer you to go home alone at this late hour?”---“I apprehend no great danger,” said she, though I confess it is a thing I have not been accustomed to.”---He replied, that in his company she should not begin the experiment:---on this a coach was ordered.---Miss Betsey made some few scruples at committing herself to the conduct of a person so little known to her.---“All acquaintance must have a beginning,” said he,

he, "the most intimate friends were perfect strangers at first.—You may depend upon it I am a man of honour, and cannot be capable of an ungenerous action."

Little more was said on the occasion, and being told a coach was at the door, they took leave of Miss Forward, and the other gentleman, and went down stairs.—On stepping into the coach, Miss Betsy directed the man where to drive; but the gentleman, unheard by her, ordered him to go to the bagnio in Orange-street.—They were no sooner seated, and the windows drawn up, to keep out the cold, than Miss Betsy was alarmed with a treatment, which her want of consideration made her little expect:—since the gentleman-commoner, at Oxford, no man had ever attempted to take the liberties which her present companion now did:—she struggled,—she repelled with all her might, the insolent pressures of his lips and hands.—"Is this," cried she, "the honour I was to depend upon?—Is it thus you prove yourself incapable of an ungenerous action?"—"Accuse me not," said he, "'till you have reason.—I have been bit once, and have made a vow never to settle upon any woman while I live again;—but you shall fare never the worse for that, —I will make you a handsome present before we part, and if you can be constant will allow you six guineas a week."

She was so confounded at the first mention of this impudent proposal, that she had not the power of interrupting him; but recovering herself, as well as she was able, "Heavens!" cried she, "what means all this?—What do you take me for?"—"Take you for," answered he laughing, "prize thee, dear girl, no more of these airs:—I take you for a pretty,---kind,---obliging creature, and such I hope to find you, as soon as we come
VGL. J. N " into

“ into a proper place.---In the mean time,” continued he, stopping her mouth with kisses, “ none of this affected coyness.”

The fright she was in, aided by disdain and rage, now inspired her with an unusual strength ; ---she broke from him, thrust down the window,--- and with one breath called him monster, ---villain ; --- with the next screamed out to the coachman to stop, and finding he regarded not her cries, would have thrown herself out, if not forcibly withheld by the gentleman, who began now to be a little startled at her resolute behaviour, ---“ What is all this for,” said he ? “ would you break your neck, or venture being crushed to pieces by the wheels ?” ---“ Any thing,” cried she, bursting into tears, “ I will venture, suffer any thing, rather than be subjected to insults, such as you have dared to treat me with.”

Though the person by whom Miss Betsy was thus dangerously attacked was a libertine, or, according to the more genteel and modish phrase, a man of pleasure, yet he wanted neither honour, nor good sense :---he had looked on Miss Betsy as a woman of the town, by seeing her with one who was so ; and her too great freedom in conversation, gave him no cause to alter his opinion ; but the manner in which she had endeavoured to rebuff his more near approaches, greatly staggered him :--- he knew not what to think, but remained in silent cogitation for some minutes, and though he held her fast clasped round the waste, it was only to prevent her from attempting the violence she had threatened, not to offer any towards her :---“ Is it possible,” said he, after this pause, “ that you are virtuous ?” ---“ I call heaven to witness,” answered she, with a voice faltering, through the excess of terror and indignation, “ that I never have entertained one thought that was not strictly so ;

“ ---that

“ — that I detest and scorn those wretched creatures of the number of whom you imagine me to be one ; and that I would sooner die the worst of deaths, than live with infamy.— Yes, Sir, be assured,” continued she, gathering more courage, that whatever appearances may be this fatal night against me, I am of a family of some consideration in the world, and am blest with a fortune, which sets me above the low temptations of designing men.”

As she had ended these words, they came to the bagnio, and the coach immediately stopping, two or three waiters came running to open the door, on which Miss Betsy, more terrified than ever, shrieked in a most piteous manner, “ O God !” cried she, “ What’s here ?—Where am I ?—What will become of me ?” And at that instant recollected, that no help was near ;—that she was in the power of a man, whose aim was her eternal ruin ;—and that it was by her own indiscretion alone, this mischief had fallen on her, was so overcome with the dread,—the shame,—the horror, as she then supposed of her inevitable fate, that she was very near falling into a swoon.

The gentleman discovering, by the light of the lamps at the bagnio door, the condition she was in, was truly touched with it.—“ Retire,” said he, hastily, to the fellows, “ we do not want you.” — Then throwing himself on his knees before her, “ Let this posture, madam,” continued he, “ obtain your pardon, “ and at the same time ease you of all apprehensions on my score.”—“ May I believe you ?” said she, still weeping.—“ You may, replied he ; then rising, and placing himself on the seat opposite to her,—“ I love my pleasures, and think it no crime to indulge the appetites of nature.—I am charmed with the kind free woman, but I honour and revere the

“ truly virtuous, and it is a maxim with me never
 “ to attempt the violation of innocence.—These,
 “ madam, are my principles in regard to your sex;
 “ —but to convince you further,—Here, fel-
 “ low,” continued he to the coachman, who was
 walking backwards and forwards at some distance,
 — “ get up into your box, and drive where you
 “ were first directed.”

Miss Betsey acknowledged the generosity of this
 behaviour, and, on his asking by what accident it
 had happened, that he found her in company with
 a woman of Miss Forward’s character, she told
 him ingenuously the truth,—that they knew each
 other when children in the country ; but that she
 had not seen her more than three times since their
 coming to London, and was entirely ignorant of her
 conduct from that time.

He then took the liberty of reminding her, that
 a young lady more endangered her reputation, by
 an acquaintance with one woman of ill fame, than
 by receiving the visits of twenty men, though pro-
 fessed libertines.—To which she replied, that for the
 future she should be very careful what company she
 kept, of both sexes.

This was the sum of the conversation, that passed
 between them during their little stage to Mr. Good-
 man’s, where being safely arrived, after having seen
 her within the doors, he saluted her with a great deal
 of respect, and took his leave.

C H A P. XXXIV.

*Shews what effects the transactions of the preceding
 night had on the minds of Miss Betsey and Mr.
 Trueworth.*

MR. Goodman and Lady Mellasin were gone
 to bed when Miss Betsey came home ; but
 Miss

Miss Flora sat up for her, in complaisance as she pretended, but in reality to see who it was came home with her. — This malicious creature had been extremely fawning, for some days past, to Miss Betsy; but this night was more so than usual, doubtless, in the hope of being able to draw something out of her, which her cruel wit might turn to her disadvantage; but the other knew too well the dispositions she had towards her, to communicate any thing to her, which she would not wish should be made public.

Never did any one pass a night in greater inquietudes, than this young lady sustained; and she felt them the more terribly, as she had no friend, to whom pride and shame would suffer her to impart the cause: — she looked back with horror on the precipice she had fallen into, and considered it as a kind of miracle, that she had recovered from it unhurt; — she could not reflect on what had passed, that by the levity of her conduct she had been thought a common prostitute, had been treated as such, and preserved from irrecoverable ruin, by the meer mercy of a man, who was a perfect stranger to her, without feeling anew that confusion, which the most shocking moments of her distress inflicted. — The most bitter of her enemies could not have passed censures more severe than she did on herself, and in this fit of humiliation, and repentance, would even have asked Mr. Trueworth pardon for the little regard she had paid to his advice.

The agitations of her mind would not suffer her to take one moment of repose for the whole night, nor did the morning afford any more tranquillity: — the disturbance of her heart flew up into her head, and occasioned so violent a pain there, that she was as unable as unwilling to get out of bed. — She lay 'till some hours after the time in which they usually breakfasted, nor would take any refreshment, though the tea was brought to her bedside.

side.—Amongst the crowd of tormenting ideas, the remembrance, that she owed all the vexation she laboured under, entirely to the acquaintance she had with Miss Forward, came strong into her thoughts, and she had not rose the whole day, if not moved to it by the impatience of venting her spleen on that unfortunate woman, which she did, in a letter to her containing these lines :

To Miss FORWARD.

‘ I AM sorry that the compassion, which your
 ‘ feigned contrition for one false step obliged me
 ‘ to take in your misfortunes, should make you
 ‘ imagine I would continue any conversation with
 ‘ you, after knowing you had abandoned yourself
 ‘ to a course of life, which I blush to think any of
 ‘ my sex can descend to brook the thoughts of,
 ‘ much more to be guilty of. —If you had re-
 ‘ tained the least spark of generosity, or good-will
 ‘ towards me, you would rather have avoided than
 ‘ coveted my company, as you must be sensible
 ‘ that to be seen with you must render me, in some
 ‘ measure, partaker of your infamy, though whol-
 ‘ ly innocent of your crimes. —How base, —
 ‘ how cruel is such a behaviour, especially to one,
 ‘ who had a real regard for you, even after you
 ‘ had confessed yourself unworthy of it ; —but I
 ‘ have been often told, and now I find the observa-
 ‘ tion just, that women of your wretched principles
 ‘ being lost to all hope of happiness themselves, take
 ‘ a malicious pleasure in endeavouring to destroy it
 ‘ in others.

‘ But, for heaven’s sake, what could induce you
 ‘ to desire a continuation of a correspondence with
 ‘ me ? —What did you take me for ? —Did you
 ‘ imagine me so blind, as not to see into the shame-
 ‘ ful means by which you are supported, or so
 ‘ weak as to forfeit all the reputation and respect I
 ‘ have

‘ have in the world, merely to comply with your
 ‘ request.—No!—your conduct is too barefaced,
 ‘ to give me even the shadow of an excuse for ever
 ‘ seeing you again: do not therefore, go about to
 ‘ varnish over actions, whose foulness will appear
 ‘ through all the colours you can daub them with.
 ‘ —The friendship I once had for you has already
 ‘ pleaded all that yourself could urge in your de-
 ‘ fence, but the cause is too bad, and I must leave
 ‘ you to the miseries which attend remorse, and
 ‘ which a little time will infallibly bring on.—
 ‘ Heavens! to be a common prostitute!—To
 ‘ earn precarious bread by being the slave of every
 ‘ man’s licentious will.—What is digging in the
 ‘ mines!--What is begging!--What is starving,
 ‘ when compared to this?—But the idea is too
 ‘ shocking,---modesty shudders at it,-- I shall drive
 ‘ both that and you as distant from my thoughts as
 ‘ possible, so be assured this is the last time you will
 ‘ ever hear from the

‘ Much deceived,

‘ And ill-treated,

“ B. THOUGHTLESS.”

She was just going to seal up the above letter, when a sudden thought coming into her head, she added, to what she had already wrote, this post-script :

‘ P. S. You may perhaps be instigated to answer
 ‘ this, either through resentment for the re-
 ‘ proaches it contains, or through some remains
 ‘ of modesty, to attempt an apology for the oc-
 ‘ casion; but I would not wish you should give
 ‘ yourself that trouble, for be assured I shall read
 ‘ nothing that comes from you, and that what-
 ‘ ever you send, will be returned to you again
 ‘ unopened.’

She immediately sent this away by a porter, and having satisfied the dictates of her indignation against Miss Forward, she had now done with her, and resolved to think of her no more ;—yet was the confusion of her mind far from being dissipated. —“ What will Mr. Truworth say,” cried she to herself, “ if ever the ridiculous adventure of last night should reach his ears, as nothing is more probable, than that it may ?--- What will my brother Frank say, on hearing such a story ?--- What Mr. Goodman and lady Mellasin say ?--- What a triumph for the envious Miss Flora ? --- And what can I answer for myself, either to my friends, or enemies ?”

Little care as this young lady had seemed to have taken of her reputation, it was notwithstanding very dear to her.---Honour was yet still more dear, and she could not reflect, that what she had done might call the one in question, and how near she had been to having the other irrecoverably lost, without feeling the most bitter agonies ; she was not able to dress, or to go down stairs that day, and gave orders to be denied to whoever should come to visit her.

In this perplexed situation of mind let us leave her for a while, and see with what sort of temper Mr. Truworth behaved, after having seen her go to the very woman he had so much conjured her to avoid.

All the love he had for her, would not keep him from resenting this last rebuff ;— he thought he had not deserved such usage, nor that his having professed himself her lover, gave her the privilege of treating him as her slave :---the humour he was in making him unfit for company, he went directly to his lodgings ; but had not been long there before it came into his head, that possibly the manner in which she had behaved was only a fit of contradiction

diction, and, that after all, she might, when she was out of hearing, have given counter-orders to the chairmen, and was neither gone to Miss Forward's, nor would accompany her to the play.--- With such vain imaginations does love sometimes flatter its votaries, and the sincere and ardent flame, which filled the heart of Mr. Trueworth, made him greedily catch at every supposition, in favour of the darling object.

Willing, however, to be more assured, he be-thought him of a stratagem, which would either relieve all the doubts remaining in him of her obstinacy, or convince him, they were but too just : ---he sent immediately to his barber for a black perriwig, and muffled up in a cloak, so as to render it almost an impossibility for him to be known by any one, went to the theatre, and with a heart divided betwixt hope and fear, placed himself in a part of the middle gallery, which had the full command of more than half the boxes ;--he saw a very brilliant circle, but not the whom he so much dreaded to find shine among them.

Having scrutinously examined all within the reach of his view, he quitted his present post, and removed to the other side of the house, where he soon discovered the persons he came in search of :--- he saw Miss Forward earnest in discourse with a gentleman that sat behind her, and Miss Betsy receiving fruit from another, with the same freedom and gaiety of deportment she could have done, if presented by himself ;-- he saw the nods,-- the winks, ---and the grimaces, which several in the pit made to each other, when looking towards these two ladies,-- every moment brought with it some fresh matter for his mortification, yet would not his curiosity stop here. --- When the play was ended, he went hastily down stairs, and mingled with the crowd that stood about the door, in hope of seeing

Miss Betsey quit her company, take a chair, and go home ;—but how cruel a stab was it to a man, who loved as he did, to find her go with her dissolute companion, and two gentlemen, who, he had reason to believe, by the little he saw of their behaviour, were utter strangers to her, into a hackney coach ;—he was once about to appear himself through his disguise, and tell Miss Betsey, that he thought he had more right to the honour of conducting her, than those to whom she gave permission ; but the greatness of his spirit assisted his prudence, in restraining him from so rash an action.

After this fight, it is not in the power of words to represent what it was he felt. Reason was too weak to combat against the force of such various emotions, as for a time had the entire possession of his soul ;—he thought Miss Betsey unworthy of his love, yet still he loved her, and had she been witness of his present distracted state, she would have seen the power she had over him, no less manifest in the moments of his rage, than in those in which he had behaved with the greatest tenderness and respect.

His good sense, however, at last convinced him, that as no solid happiness could be expected with a woman of Miss Betsey's temper, he ought to conquer his passion for her.---This he resolved to attempt, yet thought before he did so, it would become him to see her once more,---to argue gently with her, and try, at least, if there were not a possibility of making her see the errors she was guilty of.

With this intent he went the next day to visit her, but being told she could see no company that day, was going from the door, when Miss Flora, who had watched for him at the parlour window, came and desired him to walk in ;—his complaisance would not permit him to refuse her request, and

and after the usual compliments, said, he was sorry Miss Betsy was so ill.—“ You need not be in much pain,” replied she, with a look which he thought had more than an ordinary meaning in it, “ she is not greatly indisposed.”——“ Perhaps,” cried Mr. Truworth, with some warmth, “ she is only so to me,”——“ I cannot say any thing to that,” returned Miss Flora, “ but her orders were in general to all that came ; and I believe, indeed, she is not perfectly well,——she came home extremely late last night, and seemed in a good deal of disorder.”----“ Disorder, madam,” interrupted Mr. Truworth, impatiently, “ for heaven’s sake, on what occasion ?”——“ I wish I could inform you,” answered she ; “ but at present I am not favoured with her confidence, though there was a time, when I was made partaker of her dearest secrets :——I wish those she now intrusts them with, may be no less faithful to her than I have been.”——“ I hope,” said he, “ she has none which, to be betrayed in, would give her pain.”——With these words he rose up to go away.——Miss Flora said would have persuaded him to drink tea ; but he excused himself, saying, he was engaged,——that he came only to enquire after the health of her fair friend, and could not have stayed, if so happy as to have seen her.

Scarce could this passionate lover contain himself, ’till he got out of the house :——the manner in which Miss Flora had spoke of Miss Betsy, added fresh fuel to the jealousies he was before possessed of ; but how great soever his disturbance was, he found on his return home, somewhat which made all he had known before seem light and trifling.

C H A P. XXXV.

Contains some passages, which, 'tis probable will afford more pain than pleasure, yet are very pertinent to the history, and necessary to be related.

THOUGH the words which Miss Flora had let fall to Mr. Trueworth, concerning Miss Betsy, seemed as if spoken by meer chance, there was couched under them, a design of the most black and villainous kind, that ever entered the breast of woman, as will presently appear to the astonishment of every reader.

In order to do this, we must relate an incident in Miss Betsy's life, not hitherto mentioned, and which happened some little time before her going to Oxford, with her brother Frank.

On her first coming to town, a woman had been recommended to her for starching, and making up her fine linen:—this person she had ever since employed, and took a great fancy to, as she found her honest, industrious, and very obliging.—The poor creature was unhappily married,—her husband was gone from her, and had listd himself for a soldier;—being born in a distant county, she had no relations to whom she could apply for assistance,—was big with child, and had no support but the labour of her hands.—These calamitous circumstances so much touched the commiserative nature of Miss Betsy, that she frequently gave her double the sum she demanded for her work, besides bestowing on her many things she left off wearing, which, though trifles in themselves, were very helpful to a person in such distress.

Miss Mabel, for whom she also worked at the same time, was no less her patroness, than Miss Betsy.—In fine, they were both extremely kind to her, in so much as made her often cry out, in a transport

transport of gratitude, that these two good young ladies were worth to her all the customers she had besides :—they continued to prove themselves so, indeed ; for when her child was born, which happened to be a girl, they stood god-mothers, and not only gave handsomely themselves, but raised a contribution among their acquaintance, for the support of the lying-in woman and her infant ; the former, however, did not long enjoy the blessing of two such worthy friends,—she died before the expiration of her month, and the latter being wholly destitute, was about to be thrown upon the parish ;—some well disposed neighbour, who knew how kind Miss Mabel and Miss Betsy had been, came and acquainted them with the melancholy story ;—they consulted together, and each reflecting, that she had undertaken the protection of this infant at the font, thought herself bound by duty to preserve it from those hardships with which children thus exposed, are sometimes treated : — they, therefore, as they were equally engaged, agreed to join equally in the maintenance of this innocent forlorn.

This was a rare charity indeed, and few there are, especially at their years, who so justly consider the obligations of a baptismal covenant.—It was also the more to be admired, as neither of them had the incomes of their fortunes in their own hands, the one being under guardianship, and the other at the allowance of a father, who, though rich, was extremely avaritious.

As they were therefore obliged to be good economists in this point, and nurses in the country are to be had at a much cheaper rate than in town, they got a person to seek out for one, who would not be unreasonable in her demands, and at the same time do justice to her charge.—Such a one, according to the character given of her by neighbours,
being

being found, the child decently cloathed, was sent down to her habitation, which was in a little village about seventeen miles from London.—For the sake of concealing the part Miss Mabel had in this affair from the knowledge of her father, it was judged proper that Miss Betsy should seem to take the whole upon herself, which she did, and the nurse's husband came up every month, and received the money from her hands, as also whatever other necessities the child wanted.

Who would imagine, that such a glorious act of benevolence should ever be made a handle to traduce and villify the author?—yet what cannot malice, accompanied with cunning, do?—It can give the fairest virtue the appearance of the foulest vice, and pervert the just estimation of the world into a mistaken scorn and contempt.

Miss Flora, after receiving the disappointment, as related in theXXIXth chapterinthis volume, was far from desisting from the wicked design she had conceived of putting an end to the intercourse between Miss Betsy and Mr. Truworth :—her fertile brain presented her with a thousand stratagems, which she rejected, either as they were too weak to accomplish what she wished, or too liable to discovery, till at last she hit upon the most detestable project of representing what proceeded from the noblest propensity of Miss Betsy's nature, as the effect of a criminal compulsion ;—in fine, to make it appear so feasible, as to be believed, that the child who owed half its maintainance to her charity was entirely kept by herself, and the offspring of her own body.

Having well weighed and deliberated on this matter, it seemed to her such as Mr. Truworth, on the most strict examination, could not discover the deception of ; - she therefore resolved to pursue it, and accordingly wrote the following letter :

To

TO CHARLES TRUEWORTH, Esq;

‘ Sir,

‘ **T**HE friendship I had for some of your family, now deceased, and the respect due to your own character in particular, obliges me to acquaint you with truths more disagreeable than perhaps you ever yet have heard ;---but before I proceed to the shocking narrative, let me conjure you to believe, that in me your better angel speaks, and warns you to avoid that dreadful gulph of everlasting misery, into which you are just ready to be plunged.

‘ I am informed, by those who are most versed in your affairs, and on whose veracity I may depend, that a treaty of marriage is on foot, and almost as good as concluded, between you and Miss Betsy Thoughtless.---A young lady, I must confess, well descended,---handsome, and endued with every accomplishment to attract the admiration of mankind, and if her soul had the least conformity with her exterior charms, you, doubtless, might have been one of the most happy and most envied men on earth;---but, sir, this seeming innocence is all a cheat,-- another has been beforehand with you, in the joys you covet ;---your intended bride has been a mother without the pleasure of owning herself as such.--The product of a shameful passion is still living, and though she uses the greatest caution in this affair, I have by accident discovered, is now nursed at Denham, a small village, within two miles of Uxbridge, by a gardener’s wife, who is called by the country people goody Bushman.---I give you this particular account, in order that you may make what enquiry you shall think proper into a fact, which I am sorry to say, you will find but too real.---I pity from my soul the unfortunate seduced young lady,

‘ lady,——she must be doubly miserable, if by
 ‘ having lost her virtue, she loses a husband such as
 ‘ you ;——but if after this you should think fit to
 ‘ prosecute your pretensions, I wish she may endeavour,
 ‘ by her future conduct, to atone for the
 ‘ errors of the past ;——but alas ! her present manner
 ‘ of behaviour, affords no such promising expectations ;
 ‘ and if you should set your honour and fortune, and all that
 ‘ is dear to you, against so precarious a stake, as the
 ‘ hope of reclaiming a woman of her temper, it must
 ‘ certainly fill all your friends with astonishment and
 ‘ grief ;——but you are yourself the best judge of what it
 ‘ will become you to do,——I only beg, that you will
 ‘ be assured this intelligence comes from one, who
 ‘ is,

‘ With the utmost sincerity,

‘ SIR,

‘ Your well-wisher,

‘ And most humble,

‘ Though unknown, servant.”

She would not trust the success of the mischief she intended by this letter, ’till she had examined and re-examined every sentence, and finding it altogether such as she thought would work the desired effect, got one, who was always her ready agent, in matters of this kind, to copy it over, in order to prevent any accident from discovering the real author, and then sent it as directed by the penny-post.

How far the event answered her expectations shall very shortly be related, but incidents of another nature, requiring to be first mentioned, the gratification of that curiosity, which this may have excited, must for a while be deferred.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXXVI.

Is the recital of some accidents, as little possible to be foreseen by the reader, as they were by the persons to whom they happened.

IN youth, when the blood runs high, and the spirits are in full vivacity, affliction must come very heavy indeed, when it makes any deep or lasting impression on the mind.—That vexation which Miss Betsy had brought upon herself, by going to the play with Miss Forward, was severe enough the whole night, and the ensuing day.---A great while, it must be confessed, for a person of her volatile disposition, and when the more violent emotions had subsided, the terror she had lately sustained, had, at least, this good effect upon her, it made her resolve to take all possible precautions not to fall into the like danger again.—As she had an infinite deal of generosity in her nature, when not obscured by that pride and vanity which the flatteries she had been but too much accustomed to, had inspired her with, she could not reflect how ill she had treated Mr. Truworth, and the little regard she had paid to the tender concern he had shewn for her reputation, without thinking she ought to ask his pardon, and acknowledge she had been in the wrong.—If Mr. Truworth could have known the humour she was at present in, how readily would he have flown to her with all the wings of love and kind forgiveness ; but as he had not the spirit of divination, and could only judge of her sentiments by her behaviour, it was not in his power to conceive how great a change had happened in his favour, through a just sensibility of her own error.

She in the mean time, little imagined how far he resented the treatment she had given him, especially

ally as she heard he had been to wait upon her the day in which she saw no company, and after having past a night of much more tranquillity than the former had been, went down in the morning to breakfast, with her usual chearfulness ;—she had not been many minutes in the parlour, before she was agreeably surprized with the sight of her elder brother, Mr. Thomas Thoughtless, who, it seems, had arrived the night before.—After the first welcomes were over, Mr. Goodman asked him, Wherefore he did not come directly to his house ? saying, he had always a spare bed to accommodate a friend : ---To which the other replied, that he had come from Paris with some company, whom he could not quit, and that they had lain at the Humimums. ---Miss Betsy was extremely transported at his return, and said a thousand obliging things to him, all which he answered with more politeness than tenderness, and this young lady soon perceived by this specimen of his carriage to her, that she was not to expect the same affection from him, as she had received so many proofs of from her younger brother.

His long absence from England, and some attachments he had found abroad, had, indeed, very much taken off that warmth of kindness he would, doubtless, otherwise have felt for an only sister, and one who appeared so worthy of his love.---As Mr. Goodman had acquainted him by letter, that he had hired a house for him, according to his request, the chief of their conversation turned on that subject, and as soon as breakfast was over, they took a walk together to see it :---on their return he seemed very much pleased with the choice Mr. Goodman had made, and the little time he stayed was entirely taken up with consulting lady Mellasin, his sister, and Miss Flora, concerning the manner in which he should ornament it ; for the
honest

honest guardian had taken care to provide all such furniture, as he thought would be necessary for a single gentleman.

No intreaties were wanting to prevail on him, to make that house his home, till his own was thoroughly aired, and in all respects fit for him to go into; but he excused himself, saying, he could not leave the friends he had travelled with, till they were provided for as well as himself, nor could all Mr. Goodman, and the ladies urge, persuade him to dine with them that day.

It must be acknowledged, that this positive refusal of every thing that was desired of him, had not in it all that complaisance, which might have been expected from a person just come from among a people more famous for their politeness, than their sincerity.

But he had his own reasons, which the family of Mr. Goodman as yet were far from suspecting, which made him act in the manner he now did, and it was not, in reality, the want of French breeding, but the want of true old English resolution, that enforced this seeming negligence and abruptness.

After he was gone, Mr. Goodman went to 'Change, but was scarce entered into the walk, where he had appointed to meet some merchants, when he was accosted by two rough ill-looking fellows, who demanded his sword, and told him, they had a writ against him,—that he was their prisoner, and must go with them.

Mr. Goodman, who had as little reason as any man living to suspect an insult of this nature, only smiled, and told them, they were mistaken in the person.—“No, no,” said one of them, “we are right enough, if you are Mr. Samuel Goodman.”—“My name is Samuel Goodman,” replied he; “but I do not know that it stands in
“any

“any man’s books for debt;—but pray,” continued he, “at whose suit am I arrested?”—
 “At the suit of Mr. Oliver Marplus,” said the other officer.—“I have no dealings with any
 “such person,” cried Mr. Goodman, “nor even
 “ever heard the name of him you mention.”—
 They then told him, it was his business to prove that,—they did but do their duty, and he must obey the writ.—Mr. Goodman on this, knowing they were not the persons with whom this matter should be contested, readily went where they conducted him, which was to a house belonging to him who appeared to be principal of the two.—As they were coming off ’Change, he bad his coachman drive his chariot home, and tell his lady, that he believed he should not dine with her that day; but he kept his footman with him, to send on what messages he should find convenient.

The officer, knowing his condition, and not doubting but he should have a handsome present for civility-money, used him with a great deal of respect, when he had got him into his house; and, on his desiring to be informed of the lawyer’s name, employed in the action, he immediately told him, and also for what sum he was arrested, which was no less than two thousand, five hundred, and seventy-five pounds, eight shillings.—“A pretty parcel of money truly,” said Mr. Goodman, “I
 “wonder in what dream I contracted this debt.”—
 He then called for pen, ink, and paper, and wrote a line to his lawyer in the Temple, desiring him to go to the other, who, they said, was concerned against him, and find out the truth of this affair.

The honest old gentleman having sent this letter by his servant, called for something to eat, and was extremely facetious and pleasant with the officers, not doubting but that what had happened was occasioned through some mistake or other, and he
 should

should immediately be discharged, when the thing was enquired into ;——but his present good humour was changed into one altogether the reverse, when his own lawyer, accompanied by him who was engaged for his adversary, came to him, and told him, there was no remedy but to give bail ;——that the suit commenced against him, was on account of a bond given by lady Mellasin to Mr. Oliver Marplus, some few days previous to her marriage.——’Tis hard to say, whether surprise or rage was most predominant in the soul of this much-injured husband, at so shocking a piece of intelligence.——He demanded to see the bond, which request being granted, he found it, not as he at first flattered himself, a forgery, but signed with his wife’s own hand, and witnessed by Mrs. Prinks her woman, and another person whom he knew not.

It is certain, that no confusion ever exceeded that of Mr. Goodman’s, at this time ;——he sat like one transfixed with thunder, and was wholly incapable of uttering one syllable ;——he appeared to the company as lost in thought ; but was indeed almost past the power of thinking, till his lawyer roused him with these words,——“ Come, Sir,” said he, “ you see how the case stands,——there “ is no time to be lost,—you must either pay the “ money down, or get immediate security ; for I “ suppose you would not chuse to lie here to- “ night.” — This seasonable admonition brought him a little to himself :— he now began to reflect what it would best become him to do, and after a pause of some moments, “ I believe,” said he, “ that I have now in my house more than the sum “ in bills, that would discharge this bond, but I “ would willingly hear what this woman has to “ say before I pay the money, and will therefore “ give in bail.”—Accordingly he sent for two citizens of great worth and credit, to desire them to
come

come to him ;—they instantly complied with this summons, and the whole affair being repeated to them, voluntarily offered to be his sureties.

Bail bonds were easily procured, but it took up so much time in filling them up, and discharging the fees, and other consequential expences, that it was past one o'clock before all was over, and Mr. Goodman had liberty to return to his own habitation.

It was very seldom that Mr. Goodman stayed late abroad ; but whenever any thing happened that obliged him to do so, lady Mellasin, through the great affection she pretended to have for him, would never go to bed till his return.---Mrs. Prinks for the most part was her sole companion in such cases ; but it so fell out, that this night neither of the two young ladies had any inclination to sleep : ---Miss Flora's head was full of the abovementioned plot, and the anxiety for its success ; ---the remembrance of the late adventure at Miss Forward's, was not yet quite dissipated in Miss Betsy ; ---the coldness with which she imagined herself treated by her elder brother, with whom she had flattered herself of living, and being very happy under his protection, gave her a good deal of uneasiness. --To add to all these matters of disquiet, she had also received that afternoon a letter from Mr. Francis Thoughtless, acquainting her, that he had had the misfortune to be so much bruised by a fall he got from his horse, that it was utterly impossible for him to travel, and she must not expect him in town yet for some days.

The ladies were all together, sitting in the parlour, each chusing rather to indulge her own private meditations, than to hold discourse with the others, when Mr. Goodman came home.——Lady Mellasin ran to embrace him with a shew of the greatest tenderness,---“ My dear Mr. Goodman,” cried she,

she, "how much have I suffered from my fears, least some ill accident should have befallen you!" "---The worst that could have happened has befallen me," replied he, thrusting her from him; "yet no more than what you might very reasonably expect would one day or other happen."--- "What do you mean, my dear," said she, more alarmed at his words and looks than she made shew of?--- "You may too easily inform yourself what 'tis I mean," cried he hastily, "on the retrospect of your behaviour.---I now find, but too late, how much I have been imposed upon.---Did you not assure me," continued he, somewhat more mildly, "that you were free from all incumbrances but that girl, whom, since our marriage, I have tendered as my own?"--- And then perceiving she answered nothing, but looked pale and trembled, he repeated to her the affront he had received, "which," said he, "in all my dealings in the world, would never have happened, but on your account."

Though lady Mellasin had as much artifice, and the power of dissimulation, as any of her sex, yet she was at a loss thus taken unprepared.---she hesitated,---she stammered, and fain would have denied the having given any such bond; but finding the proofs too plain against her, she threw herself at his feet,---wept, and conjured him to forgive the only deception she had practised on him:--- "It was a debt," said she, "contracted by my former husband, which I knew not of.---I thought the effects he left behind him were more than sufficient to have discharged whatever obligations he lay under, and foolishly took out letters of administration.---The demand of Marplus came not upon me till some time after,---I then inconsiderately gave him my own bond, " which

“ which he however promised not to put in force
 “ without previously acquainting me.”

This excuse was too weak, as well as all the affection Mr. Goodman had for her, to pacify the emotions of his just indignation,—“ And pray,” cried he, in a voice divided between scorn and anger, “ of what advantage would it have been to
 “ me your being previously acquainted with it?—
 “ Could you have paid the money without robbing, or defrauding me?—No, madam,” continued he, “ I shall for the future give credit to
 “ nothing you can say, and as I cannot be assured
 “ that this is the only misfortune I have to dread
 “ on your account, shall consider what steps I
 “ ought to take for my defence.”

In speaking these words he rung the bell for a servant, and ordered that bed, to which he had invited Mr. Thoughtless, should that instant be made ready for himself.—All the tears and intreaties of lady Mellasin were in vain, to make him recede from his resolution of lying alone that night; and as soon as he was told his orders were obeyed, he flung out of the room, saying,---“ Madam, perhaps, we never more may meet between a pair
 “ of sheets.”---Whether at that time he was determined to carry his resentment so far, or not, is uncertain, but what happened very shortly after, left him no other part to take, than that which he had threatened.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Gives a full explanation of some passages, which hitherto have seemed very dark and mysterious.

THIS was a night of great confusion in Mr. Goodman's family :---lady Mellasin either was, or pretended to be, in fits ;---Miss Flora was called

called up soon after she went to bed, but Mr. Goodman himself would not be prevailed upon to rise, though told the condition his wife was in, and that she begged with the utmost earnestness to see him.

This behaviour in a husband lately so tender and affectionate, is a proof, not only that the greatest love once turned degenerates into its reverse, but also that the sweetest temper, when too much provoked by injuries, is not always the most easy to be reconciled.---The perfect trust he had put in lady Mellasin,---the implicit faith he had given to all she said,---and the dependance he had on the love she had professed for him, made the deception she was now convicted of appear in worse colours, than otherwise it would have done.

The more he reflected on this ugly affair, the more he was convinced of the hypocrisy of his wife, in whom he had placed such confidence.---“ We have been married near five years,” said he, to himself; “ how comes it to pass, that the penalty of this bond was not in so long a time demanded ?---It must be that she has kept it off by large interest, and forbearance-money, and who knows how far my credit may be endangered for the raising of it ? ’Tis likely, that while I thought every thing necessary for my family was purchased with ready money, I may stand indebted to all the tradesmen this wicked woman has had any dealings with ;---nay, I cannot even assure myself, that other obligations of the same kind with this I have already suffered for, may not, some time or other call upon me for their discharge.”

With these disturbed meditations, instead of sleep, did he pass what was remaining of the night, when he went to bed ; yet he arose the next day full as

early as he was accustomed to do, after having enjoyed the best repose.

The first thing he did was to send for as many of those trades-people, as he either knew himself, or his servants could inform him, had at any time sent goods into his house.——On their presenting themselves before him, he found, more to his vexation than surprise, for he now expected the worst, that all of them, even to those who supplied his kitchen, had bills of a long standing :——he discharged all their several demands directly, and having taken a receipt in full from each of them, desired they would henceforward suffer no goods to be left within his doors without the value being paid on the delivery.

Mr. Goodman had just dispatched the last of these people, when he was told a woman begged leave to speak to him :——“ Another creditor, I ‘ suppose,” said he, and then ordered she should come in.——As soon as she did so,——“ Well, “ mistress,” cried he, seeing her a woman of a very plain appearance,——“ what is it you require of “ me ?”——“ Nothing, Sir,” replied she, “ but “ that-you will permit me to acquaint you with a “ thing, which it very much concerns you to be “ informed of?”——“ I should otherwise be an “ enemy to myself,” resumed he, “ therefore “ pray speak what you have to say .”

‘ I am, Sir,’ said she, ‘ the unfortunate wife ‘ of one of the most wicked men upon earth, and ‘ by my being so have been compelled to be in ‘ some measure accessory to the injustice you have ‘ sustained ; but I hope what I have to reveal will ‘ atone for my transgression.’——Mr. Good- ‘ man then desiring she would sit down, and without any farther prelude proceed to the business she came upon.

‘ The sum of what I have to relate,’ rejoined she,

she, ' is, that the bond, on which you were yesterday arrested, and for the payment of which you have given security, is no more than an impudent fraud; but the particulars, that prove it such, cannot but be very displeasing to you; however I shall make no apology for relating them, as the perfect knowledge of the whole transaction may put you in a way to prevent all future injuries of the like nature.

' My husband, whose name is Oliver Marplus,' continued she, ' had the honour of waiting on a nobleman belonging to court, when Sir Simon Mellasin had a post there:—his lady, now unhappily yours, took a fancy to him, and entered into a criminal conversation with him, some time before her husband's death, and has ever since, unless very lately broke off, continued it. On my first discovering it, he begged me to be easy, and reminded me, that as he had nothing at present to depend upon, having lost his place, but her ladyship's bounty, I ought to wink at it, and be content that she should share his person, since I share in the benefits arising from their intercourse.—I knowing his temper too well, not to know that any opposition I could make would be in vain, and seeing no other remedy, was obliged to feign a consent to what the love I then had for him rendered most terrible to me--- Thus we went on, her ladyship still supplying him with money for our support, till he being informed, that her marriage with you was near being consummated, he bethought himself of a stratagem to prevent the change of her condition from depriving him of the continuance of her favour. ---It was this:

' Their private meetings were always in the Savoy, at a house of my husband's chusing for that purpose, the master of it being his intimate friend

‘ and companion.---Myself, and two men, whom
 ‘ he made privy to the plot, and were to personate
 ‘ officers of justice, were to be concealed in the
 ‘ next room to the lovers, and as soon as we
 ‘ found they were in bed, burst open the door,
 ‘ rush in, and catch them in the very act of
 ‘ shame.

‘ All this was executed according as it was con-
 ‘ trived ;—my husband jumped out of bed, pre-
 ‘ tended to struggle with the sham constables, and
 ‘ swore he would murder me.---I acted my part, as
 ‘ they since told me, to the life,——seemed a very
 ‘ fury, and said I did not care what became of me,
 ‘ if I was but revenged upon my rival.—Lady
 ‘ Mellasin tore her hair, wept, and intreated me
 ‘ in the most abject terms to forgive, and not
 ‘ expose a woman of her rank to public scorn
 ‘ and infamy.---To which I replied, that it was
 ‘ not her quality should protect her :—I loaded her
 ‘ with the most inveterate reproaches I could think
 ‘ of. - Indeed, there required not much study for
 ‘ my doing so, for I heartily hated her.---After
 ‘ some time passed in beseechings on her side, and
 ‘ railings on mine, one of the pretended constables
 ‘ took me aside, as if to persuade me to more mo-
 ‘ deration, while the other talked to her, and in-
 ‘ sinuated as if a sum of money might compromise
 ‘ the matter.--- My husband also told her, that
 ‘ though he detested me for what I had done, yet
 ‘ he wished her ladyship, for her own sake, would
 ‘ think of some way to pacify me ;---for, said he,
 ‘ a wife in these cases has great power.’

‘ The terror she was in of appearing before a ci-
 ‘ vil magistrate, and of being liable to suffer that
 ‘ punishment the law inflicts upon an adultress,
 ‘ and consequently the loss of all her hopes of a
 ‘ marriage with you, Sir, made her readily agree
 ‘ to do any thing I should require.---I seemed quite
 ‘ averse

‘averse for a good while to listen to any terms of
‘accommodation, but at length affected to be o-
‘vercome by the persuasions of the men I brought
‘with me, and her promise of allowing us a very
‘handsome support, as soon as she became your
‘wife, and should have it in her power.---This
‘I made slight on, and told her, that I would not
‘depend upon her promise for any thing.---It was
‘then proposed, that she should give a bond for
‘a large sum of money to Mr. Marplus.---‘That
‘you may do with safety,’ said he to her, ‘as I
‘shall have it in my own hands, and you may be
‘assured will never put it in force to your preju-
‘dice.’

‘In fine, Sir, continued Mrs. Marplus, she a-
‘greed to this proposal, and as it was then too late
‘for the execution of what she had promised, on
‘her making a solemn vow to fulfil it punctually
‘the next day, I told her, she was at liberty to go
‘home that night, but that I would not withdraw
‘the warrant I pretended to have taken out against
‘her, till all was over.

‘She was, indeed, too much rejoiced at the ex-
‘pectation of getting off from the imaginary pro-
‘secution to think of breaking her word;—my
‘wicked husband, however, had the success of his
‘design more greatly at heart, than to give her any
‘long time for reflection: accordingly we went
‘pretty early the next morning to her lodgings, ac-
‘companied by one of those, who had assumed
‘the character of constable, and who, in reality,
‘had formerly served the parish where he still lives
‘in that capacity, and a lawyer, previously direct-
‘ed to fill up the bond in the strongest and most
‘binding terms that words could form.——There
‘was not the least demur or objection, on the part
‘of her ladyship;—she signed her name, and Mrs.

‘ Prinks, her woman, and the man we brought with us, set their hands as witnesses.

‘ You see, Sir,’ pursued she, ‘ the drift of this contrivance, lady Mellasin was the instrument, but it was you that was ordained to suffer :— there was no fixed sum, or sums, stipulated for the support we were to receive from her ; but Marplus was so continually draining her purse, that I have often been amazed by what arts she imposed on you to replenish it.—Whenever she began to make any excuse for not complying with his demands, he presently threatened her with putting the bond in force against you, by which means he extorted from her almost whatever he required.’

‘ One time in particular, he pretended to be under an arrest for three hundred pounds, and she not having so much money by her, was obliged to send Mrs. Prinks, with her diamond necklace, to the pawn broker’s to make it up ;—yet,— would you believe it, Sir ?—notwithstanding all he got from her ladyship, he kept me poor and mean, as you see ;—would not let me have a servant, but made me wash his linnen, and do all the drudgery, while he strutted about the town, like a fine fellow, with his tupee wig, and laced waistcoat, and if I made the least complaint, would tell me in derision, that as I had no children I had nothing else to do but to wait upon him.—I bore all this, however, because I loved the villain, and, indeed, did not then know he was so great a one to me, as I now find he is.

‘ He pretended to me, that he was heartily weary of lady Mellasin,—hated her,— and could no longer bear the pain of dissembling with her, ——— ‘ I will, therefore,’ said he, ‘ demand a much larger sum of her, than I know it is in her power to raise :—her noncompliance will
“ give

“ give me an excuse for compelling her husband to
 “ pay the penalty of the bond, and when I have
 “ got the money I will purchase an employment
 “ in some one or other of the public offices, on
 “ which you and I may live comfortably together
 “ the remainder of our days.’

‘ Accordingly, at his next meeting with lady
 ‘ Mellasin, he told her, he had a present occasion
 ‘ for a sum of money, and she must let him have
 ‘ five hundred pounds, within four or five days
 ‘ at farthest.---This, it seems, extremely alarmed
 ‘ her ; she replied, that it was impossible for her
 ‘ to procure so much at once,—complained that
 ‘ he had been too pressing upon her, and told him,
 ‘ that he ought not to expect she could always sup-
 ‘ ply his extravagancies in the manner she had late-
 ‘ ly done.—High words arose between them on
 ‘ this account ; --she reproached him with the
 ‘ straits he had already put her to,—said he must
 ‘ wait till money came into her hands.—He swore
 ‘ the present exigence of his affairs required an im-
 ‘ mediate supply,—that he saw no remedy but at-
 ‘ resting you, and they parted in great anger.

‘ The next day he sent me to her with a letter ;
 ‘ —neither she, nor Mrs. Prinks, was at home,
 ‘ and I did not judge proper to leave it with the
 ‘ servants, so carried it back again : ---he did not
 ‘ happen to ask me for it, and I never thought of
 ‘ returning it, which I am now very glad of, as it
 ‘ may serve to corroborate the truth of what I
 ‘ told you.’

In speaking this, she presented a paper to Mr.
 Goodman, which he took hastily out of her hands,
 and found it contained these words :

To lady MELLASIN.

‘ *Madam,*

‘ **Y**OUR excuses won’t do with me,---Money
 ‘ I must have;---I know you may raise it if
 ‘ you.

' you will, and I am amazed you should imagine
 ' I can believe any thing you say to the contrary,
 ' when you have an old fellow, who, you your-
 ' self told me, knows no end to his wealth, and
 ' that you married him only to make him my bank-
 ' er.---Do not, therefore, offer to trifle with me
 ' any longer, for if you do, by my soul I shall
 ' put the bond in force, and then there will be an
 ' end of all love and all friendship between you and
 ' him, who has been for so many years,

' Your constant servant,

' O. MARPLUS.'

" Oh ! wretched,---wretched woman !" cried
 Mr. Goodman, as soon as he had done reading,
 ---" to how low, --how contemptible a state has
 " vice reduced her!"---Mrs. Marplus, perceiving
 by his countenance the distraction of his mind,
 would not prosecute her discourse, till he, re-
 covering himself a little, bid her go on, if any
 thing yet remained to be related of this shocking
 narrative.

' I have told you, Sir,' resumed she, the pre-
 ' parations, the consequence you are but too well
 ' acquainted with.---I have only to assure you, that
 ' I had not discovered my husband's baseness, but
 ' with a view of your doing yourself justice ;---
 ' you have no occasion to pay this bond,---you can
 ' prove it a fraud by the joint evidence of myself
 ' his wife, and another person, no less deeply con-
 ' cerned in the contrivance, and is ready to make
 ' his affidavit of every particular I have recited ;---
 ' but then whatsoever is done, must be done with
 ' expedition, or he will be past the reach, either of
 ' you or me.---I have just now learned, that instead
 ' of purchasing an employment, as he pretended
 ' to me, he is privately preparing to go over to
 Holland, Brussels, or some of those places, and
 settle

‘ Tattle there with a young hussley, who, they say,
 ‘ is with child by him, and will leave me here to
 ‘ starve. His lawyer, to whom he has assigned
 ‘ the bond, is to advance fifteen hundred pounds
 ‘ upon it, on condition he has the residue of it to
 ‘ himself, when you shall discharge the whole.
 ‘ Now it is in your power, Sir, to save yourself
 ‘ the payment of so much money, and relieve a
 ‘ much injured and distressed wife, by complaining
 ‘ to the court of Chancery of the imposition prac-
 ‘ ticed on you, and procure a *Ne exeat regnum* to
 ‘ prevent his escape.’

Here she gave over speaking, and Mr. Goodman after a short pause, replied, that he could not at that instant resolve on any thing ; but added, that he would take some advice, and then let her know how far she might be serviceable to him : -- on which she took her leave, after giving him directions where she might be found.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

Shews some part of the consequences, produced by the foregoing occurrence.

THOUGH Mr. Goodman very easily perceived the wife of Marplus had not made the discovery she had done through any principle of conscience, or true contrition for having been an accomplice in the base action she had revealed, but merely in revenge to a husband, who had used her ill, and was about to leave her, yet he thought it behoved him to draw all the advantages he could, from the knowledge of so astonishing, and so alarming a secret.

He therefore wasted no time, either in unavailing reflections on his own inconsiderateness in marrying at his years, a woman, such as lady Mellasin,

nor in exclamations on her ingratitude and perfidiousness, but convinced beyond a doubt of the wrongs he had sustained, bent his whole mind on doing himself justice, in as ample a manner as possible, on the aggressors.

The lawyer, to whom he had applied the day before, was not only a person who had transacted all the business he had in his way, but was also his acquaintance of a long standing, and very good friend, and it was no inconsiderable consolation, under so grievous a misfortune, that he was not at a loss whom he should consult on an affair that required the greatest integrity, as well as ability.

The gentleman, luckily for Mr. Goodman's impatience, came to enquire how he did, after his last night's shock, just as he was preparing to wait on him, in order to acquaint him with the more stabbing one he had since received : —this injured husband rejoiced, as much as the present unhappy situation of his mind would permit, at the sight of his friend, and related to him, in as brief a manner as he could, the sum of the whole story he had received from Mrs. Marplus.

“ Good God !” said the lawyer, as soon as Mr. Goodman had given over speaking, “ I am confounded ; —but pray, Sir, how have you resolved to do ? —In what way will you proceed ?”
“ ---That I must ask of you,” replied Mr. Goodman, hastily ; “ you may be certain I will not be passive in this matter. —I only want to know what course I am to steer.” —“ Could you consent,” cried the lawyer, after a pause, “ to be divorced from lady Mellasin ?” —“ Consent !” said Mr. Goodman, with more warmth than before, “ the most terrible vexation I endure, dwells in the consideration, that she is still my wife ; —were once that name erased, I think I should be easy.”

“ easy.”—“ I hope then soon to see you so,” said the other ; “ but the first thing we have to do is to “ get the affidavits of the two witnesses, and then “ arrest Marplus.---I shall order it so with his lawyer, whom I have under my thumb, on account “ of some mal-practices I have detected him in, “ that he shall not dare to procure bail for this “ unworthy client.---In fine, Sir,” continued he, “ I do not doubt, the case being so plain, but to “ relieve you from paying the penalty of the bond ; “ but, in the mean time, what will you do with “ lady Mellasin ?--- It is necessary she should be “ removed out of the house.”---“ The house is “ hell to me while she is in it,” said Mr. Goodman.---They had some further talk on this affair, and the manner in which Mr. Goodman was to conduct himself being settled, a footman was sent to bid Mrs. Prinks come down.

That confidanté of all her lady’s guilty secrets could not, now detected, behold the face of Mr. Goodman, without the extremest terror and confusion :-- he perceived it, as she stood trembling scarce half within the door, not daring to approach,—— “ Come near” said he, “ you are a servant, and “ below the effects of my resentment, which otherwise you might have cause to dread. --I have “ a message to send by you to your lady,---take “ care you deliver it in the words I give it.”-- On which she ventured to advance a few steps farther into the room, and he went on, with a more authoritative voice than she had ever heard him assume before, in this manner :

“ Tell her,” said he, “ that for many reasons I “ find it wholly improper she should remain any “ longer under the same roof with me,--desire “ her therefore to provide a lodging immediately, “ for herself, and all belonging to her ; --you “ must all depart this very night, so it behoves her

“ to be speedy in her preparations.”---“ To-night,
 “ Sir!” cries Mrs. Prinks?---“ I have said it,”
 “ rejoined he, sincerely,---“ begone! it is not
 “ your business to reply, but to obey.”---She spoke
 no more, but retired with much greater haste than
 she had entered.

Mr. Goodman, and his lawyer, were pursuing
 their discourse, on the present melancholy occasion;
 when the butler came in to lay the cloth for din-
 ner: as soon as he had finished, and set all the ne-
 cessary utensils on the table, Mr. Goodman ordered
 him to go to Miss Betsey’s chamber, and desire her
 to come down to dinner.

That young lady had passed the morning in a very
 disagreeable manner:---the want of repose the night
 before had made her lie in bed till the day was very
 far advanced:---when she got up, good-manners,
 good-breeding, and even common civility, obliged
 her to enquire after lady Mellasin’s health; and be-
 ing told, that she was still in bed, the same motives
 induced her to pay her compliments in person, --
 On entering the chamber, a mournful scene present-
 ed itself to her eyes:--lady Mellasin sat up, sup-
 ported by her pillows, with all the tokens of despair
 and grief, in every feature of her face;---Miss
 Flora had thrown herself on a carpet by the bed-side,
 her head leaning on the *ruëlle*, and her eyes half
 drowned in tears;---Mrs. Prinks stood at a little
 distance from them, pale and motionless as a statue.
 ---The approach of Miss Betsey made some al-
 teration in their postures, and seemed to awake
 them from that lethargy of silent woe;---lady
 Mellasin began to exclaim on the hardness of
 her fate, and the cruelty of Mr. Goodman, who,
 she said, seemed glad of a pretence to throw off that
 affection, which she had flattered herself would have
 been as lasting as life, and bewailed herself in terms
 so tender and pathetic, that in spite of the little
 respect,

respect, that Miss Betsy in reality had for her, and the just indignation she had for some time conceived against Miss Flora, her gentle, generous heart was touched with the strongest emotions of pity and forgiveness.

As she was far from suspecting all the grounds lady Mellashin had for this immoderate sorrow, and in her soul believing that Mr. Goodman would soon be brought to forgive both the affront and the damage his fortune had suffered on her account, she begged her ladyship would not indulge the dictates of despair, but reflect on the natural sweetness of Mr. Goodman's disposition, — the great love he had for her, and above all his strict adherence to those principles of religion, which forbid a lasting resentment ; — and, in fine, reminded her of every thing she could think on for her consolation.

None of them having yet breakfasted, she stayed and drank coffee with them, nor would her compassionate temper have permitted her to quit them so soon as she did, if she had not been called away to a millener, who was come with some things she had the day before ordered to be brought, and she had but just dispatched this little affair, and got out of her deshabille, when she had received the above-mentioned message from Mr. Goodman.

On her coming into the parlour, where dinner was that moment serving up, “ I must request the
“ favour of you, Miss Betsy,” said Mr. Goodman,
“ to do the honours of my table to-day.” —
“ I shall do the best I can, sir,” replied Miss Betsy, modestly, “ but am very sorry for the occasion, which obliges me to take upon me an office I am so little accustomed to.” — “ You
“ will be the better able to discharge it when it
“ becomes your duty,” said Mr. Goodman, with a half smile, “ but I believe this is the only time I
“ shall

“ shall put you to it.——I have a kinswoman,
 “ who I expect will be so good as to take care of
 “ the affairs of my family henceforward.”——“ O,
 “ sir,” cried Miss Betsey, with a great deal of concern, “ I hope lady Mellasin has not for ever forfeited her place.”

Mr. Goodman was about to make some reply, when they heard the voice of that lady, whom Miss Betsey had just mentioned, extremely loud upon the stairs,——“ I will not be used in this manner,” cried she, “ if I must go, let him tell me so himself.”——On this Mr. Goodman grew extremely red ;——“ Go,” said he, to the footman that waited at table, “ and tell lady Mellasin “ I will not be disturbed.”——“ Hold,” cried the lawyer, “ permit me, sir, to moderate this matter.”——In speaking these words, he rose hastily, and without staying to hear what Mr. Goodman would say, ran to prevent lady Mellasin from coming in.——While he was gone, “ Yes, Miss Betsey,” said Mr. Goodman, “ you will lose your companion ; “ —Miss Flora, with her mother, leaves my house “ to-night.”

Miss Betsey, who had gone out of lady Mellasin’s chamber, before Mrs. Prinks brought her this piece of intelligence from Mr. Goodman, was prodigiously surprised to hear him speak in this manner. “ ---It is a sudden turn, indeed,” pursued he ; “ but “ the reasons which urge me to this separation, will “ hereafter appear such as I neither could nor ought “ to have resisted.”——Miss Betsey only replying, that he was certainly the best judge of what he did, no farther discourse happened on this subject, nor indeed on any other for some moments.

At last, however, Mr. Goodman taking notice, that she looked more than ordinarily serious, “ Perhaps,” said he, “ you may think my house too “ melancholly for you, when they are gone.----
 “ The

“ The relation I intend to bring home, though a
“ perfect good woman, is pretty far advanced in
“ years, and I believe receives but few visits, espe-
“ cially from the younger sort ;—but as the house
“ I have hired for Mr. Thoughtless will be ready
“ in a day or two, I should imagine he would be
“ glad to have you with him, ’till you marry ;---
“ but this,” continued he, “ is at your own option,
“ —I but mention it, because I would have you
“ entirely easy in this point, and consider what it
“ is will most contribute to make you so.”

Miss Betsy had only time to thank him for his goodness, before the lawyer came down :---that gentleman had found a more difficult task than he had expected, in bringing lady Mellasin to submit to the injunctions she had received from her husband,---not that she had the least spark of conjugal affection for him, as the reader may very well suppose, or would have wished ever to see him more, if she could have lived without him in the same fashion she did with him ; but the thoughts of leaving her large and richly furnished house,--her fine side-board of plate,--her coach,--her equipage, and all those other ensigns of opulence and state she now enjoyed, were insupportable to her, and having in vain essayed what a feigned penitence and tenderness could do, to work him to forgiveness, had now resolved to try the effect of a more haughty and imperious deportment,-- “ I will make him
“ know I am his wife,” cried she, “ and what-
“ ever he is possesst of, I am an equal sharer in :---
“ let him not therefore think, that wherever he is
“ master, I shall cease to be mistress.”

The lawyer then remonstrated to her, that though it were true as she said, that she had a right to partake of his fortune, yet it was still in the power of a husband to oblige her to receive the benefit of that right, in what manner, and in what place, he
should

should think proper :---he told her, Mr. Goodman was determined that she should quit his house, and that all applications, made by her to the contrary, would be fruitless, and exasperate him the more, and only serve to widen the unhappy breach between them.—“ If Mr. Goodman,” said he, “ has
 “ no other complaint against your ladyship, than
 “ simply his paying the penalty of the bond, and
 “ it may be some other trifling debts, I cannot
 “ think he will, for any length of time, persevere
 “ in his present inflexibility of temper.”—These arguments, and some others he made use of, enforced with all the rhethoric and art he was master of, at last convinced her, that it was best for her to yield with a seeming willingness to the fate it was not in her power to avoid, and she promised him to send Prinks directly to hire an apartment for her, at a house near Golden Square, with the mistress of which she had some small acquaintance.

The whole time this gentleman had been with lady Mellasin, the meat was kept upon the table, but he would not stay to eat,—“ We have not a
 “ minute to lose,” said he to Mr. Goodman ;—
 “ let us go, sir, and dispatch what we have to do.” With these words they both went hastily out of the doors, leaving Miss Betsy in a good deal of consternation at what they were about.

C H A P. XXXIX.

Is a kind of olio, a mixture of many things, all of them very much to the purpose, though less entertaining than some others.

LADY Mellasin, who little expected that her husband was made so well acquainted, or even that he had the least thought of the worst part of her behaviour towards him, was ready enough to
 flatter

flatter herself, both from her experience of his uncommon tenderness for her, and from what his lawyer had insinuated, in order to prevail on her to go away with the less noise, that when this gust of passion was blown over, he would be reconciled, and consent to her return.

These imaginations made her carry it with a high hand before the servants, and as they were packing up her things, while Mrs. Prinks was gone to prepare a lodging for her,—"Your master will be glad to fetch me home again," cried she;—"poor man! he has been strangely wrong-headed of late.—I suppose he will be ready to hang himself when he considers what he has done, for he may be sure I shall not very easily forgive the affront he has put upon me."

How truly amiable is an unblemished character, and how contemptible is the reverse!—Servants naturally love and respect virtue in those they live with, and seldom or never either flatter or conceal the vices they do not greatly profit by.—The airs lady Mellasin gave herself, on this occasion, were so far from making them believe her innocent, or their master blameable, that as soon as they had got out of her sight, they only turned her pride, and the fall it was going to sustain, into ridicule and grimace.

Miss Betsy, however, could not see them depart in this manner, without feeling a very deep concern:—their misfortunes obliterated all the resentment she had at any time conceived against them, and she had never before been more angry, even with Miss Flora, for the treachery she had been guilty of to her, than she was now grieved at the sight of her humiliation.

She was sitting alone, and full of very serious reflections on this sudden change in the family, when her brother Thoughtless came in:—she glad o
th

the opportunity of founding his inclinations, as to her living with him, and now resolved to do it effectually :—she began with telling him, the whole story of lady Mellasin's and Miss Flora's removal, and then complained how dully she should pass her time, with only Mr. Goodman, and an old gentlewoman, who was to come to be his house-keeper. —“ I thought you were about marrying,” said he, “ and expected from what Mr. Goodman wrote to me, that my first compliment to you, on my arrival, would have been to have wished you joy. — You are not broke off with the gentleman, — are you ?”

The careless air with which he spoke these words, stung Miss Betty to the quick ; she took no notice, however, how much she was piqued at them, but replied, that the whole affair was mere suggestion ; that it was true, indeed, she had for some time received the addresses of a gentleman, recommended by her brother Frank ; — that he, and some other of her friends, were very much for the match, and she supposed had spoke of it as a thing concluded on, because they wished it to be so ; but for her own part, she never had as yet entertained one serious thought about the matter, and at present was far from having any disposition to become a wife ; “ — so that,” continued she, “ if I am doomed to stay in Mr. Goodman's house, 'till I am relieved that way, it is very probable I may be moped to death, and married to my grave.”

“ Where is the necessity for that ?” said he : “ Are there not places enough in town, where you may find good company to board, or lodge with ?” “ — Doubtless there are many such, sir,” replied she, with some spirit, “ and if I am so unhappy as not to have any friend so kind to make me an invitation, shall be obliged to seek an asylum among strangers.”

Mr.

Mr. Thoughtless looked a little confounded at these words ;——he had seen from the beginning of her discourse, the aim to which it tended, and as he had his own reasons for not complying with her desires, would not seem to understand her, but she now spoke too plain, and he was somewhat at a loss what answer to make, so as not to give her any cause of accusing his want of affection, and at the same time put her off from expecting he would agree to, what she would have him, in this point, when fortunately for his relief, a letter just brought by the post was presented to Miss Betsy. ——“ From L——e,” said she, as soon as she took it into her hand. ——“ From brother Frank, “ then, I suppose,” cried he. ——“ No,” answered she, “ from lady Trusty :——you will excuse me, “ brother, while I look over the contents.” —— She broke it open while she was speaking, and read to herself as follows :

TO Miss BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

‘ *My dear Miss Betsy,*

‘ **S**IR Ralph received yesterday a letter from
‘ Mr. Though less, dated Calais the third in-
‘ stant, so I doubt not, but by this time I may
‘ congratulate you on his safe arrival in London ;
‘ but I am sorry to acquaint you, that while you
‘ were embracing one brother, you were in very
‘ great danger of losing another ; but do not be
‘ too much alarmed,——I hope the worst is past :
‘ —I believe he gave you an account himself, that
‘ by an unlucky fall from his horse he was pre-
‘ vented from going to London so soon as he had
‘ designed, but the mischief done him by this ac-
‘ cident, was much greater than he imagined at
‘ the time of his writing to you.——What he took
‘ only for a common bruise proved to be a contusi-
‘ on, and for want of proper care at first, thought
‘ the

' the outrageousness of the pain, soon brought on
 ' a fever :—for two whole days we were in the
 ' utmost apprehensions for his life, but now, thanks
 ' to the author of all mercies, we are assured by
 ' the physician that attends him, and who is es-
 ' teemed the most skilful this country affords, that
 ' he is in a fair way of doing well.—His delirium
 ' has quite left him, and he has recovered the use
 ' of his reason, so far as to intreat I would send the
 ' warmest wishes of his heart to you, and to desire
 ' you will make the same acceptable to his dear
 ' brother, if you are yet so happy as to see him :
 ' ---he also enjoins you to put his compliments to
 ' to Mr. Truworth, in such words as are befitting
 ' the friendship you know he has for him.---I have
 ' much to say to you from myself, on the score of
 ' that gentleman, and should be glad to add to the
 ' advice I have already given you, but am deprived
 ' of that satisfaction by the arrival of some com-
 ' pany, who are come to pass a week or fortnight
 ' with us, therefore must defer what I have to say
 ' till another opportunity.---Farewel, may heaven
 ' still keep you under its protection, and your guar-
 ' dian angel never fail his charge.---Be assured,
 ' that though I do not write so long, nor so often
 ' to you as I could wish, I am always,

' With the greatest sincerity,

' My dear Miss Betsy,

' Your very affectionate friend,

' And humble servant,

M. TRUSTY.'

' P. S. I wrote the above this morning, because
 ' one of our men was to have gone pretty early
 ' to town, but Sir Ralph having some letters of
 ' his own, which were not then ready, detained
 ' him, and I have now the pleasure to tell you,
 ' that the doctor, who is this moment come
 ' from your brother's chamber, assures me, that
 ' he

‘ he has found him wonderfully amended, since
‘ his visit to him last night.---Once more, my
‘ dear, adieu.’

Mr. Thoughtless perceiving some tears in the eyes of Miss Betsy, while she was reading, cried out, “ What is the matter, sister ? --I hope no ill
“ news from the country.”--- “ Be pleased to read
“ that, Sir,” said she, giving him the letter, “ and
“ see if I had not cause to be affected, with some
“ part of it.”

“ Poor Frank,” said he, as soon as he had done
“ reading, “ I am very sorry for the accident has
“ happened to him, but more glad that it is like
“ to be attended with no worse consequences.---
“ Do not be melancholy, my dear sister, you find
“ he is in a fair way of recovery, and I hope we
“ shall soon have him with us. I long very
“ much to see him,” continued he, “ and the
“ more so, as I have spoke in his behalf to a general
“ officer, whom I contracted an intimacy with at
“ Paris, and who has promised him all the service
“ he can, in procuring him a commission.”

They had some further talk on family affairs, after which he told her, he was troubled to leave her alone, but was obliged to return to some company he had made an elopement from when he came there. At parting, he saluted her with a great deal of affection, -desired she would be cheerful, and said, he dare believe she had too much merit ever to have any real cause to be otherwise.

This tenderness very much exhilarated her drooping spirits,---she extertained fresh hopes of being in the house with a brother, who she found designed to live in the most elegant and polite manner, which was what she had, at present, the most at heart of any thing in the world : --she now began to fancy he did not propose it to her, either because he did not think she would approve of it, or because he feared, that to testify any desire of removing

ing

ing her might offend Mr. Goodman, as she had boarded with him ever since she came to town ;--- she therefore resolved to desire the favour of that gentleman to mention it to him, as of his own accord, and let her know what answer he should make.---This idea gave her some pleasure for a while, but it was as soon dissipated ;---the thoughts of her brother Frank's misfortune, and the danger she could not be sure he was yet perfectly recovered from, came again into her mind ; but this also vanished, on remembring the hopes lady Truffy had given her, yet still she was discontented, though she knew not well at what.---In fine, she was so little accustomed to reflect much on any thing, much less to be alone, that it became extremely irksome to her.--- " What a wilderness is this " house !" cried she to herself.---" What a fright-
 " ful solitude !---One would think all the world
 " knew lady Mellasin and Miss Flora were gone,
 " that nobody comes near the door.---How still ?
 " How quiet is every thing ?"---Then would she start from her chair, measure how many paces were in the room,---look at one picture,---then on another,---then on her own resemblance in the great glass ;---but all this would not do :---she wanted somebody to talk to,---something new to amuse herself with.---" I wonder," said she, " what is
 " become of Truworth,---I have not seen him
 " these three days,---indeed I used him a little ill
 " at our last conversation ;---but what of that ?
 " If he loves me as well as he professes, he will
 " not sure pretend to be affronted at any thing I do.
 " -- My brother desires me to give his compli-
 " ments, but if the man will not come to receive
 " them, 'tis none of my fault ;--- yet after all," continued she, having paused a little, " what pri-
 " vilege has our sex to insult and tyrannize over the
 " men?---It is certainly both ungenerous and un-
 " grateful

“ grateful to use them the worse, for using us,
“ perhaps, better than we deserve.---Mr. True-
“ worth is a man of sense, and, if I were in his
“ place, I would not take such treatment from
“ any woman in the world.---I could not much
“ blame him if he never saw me more.---Well,---
“ when next he comes, I will, however, behave
“ to him with more respect.”

Thus did the dictates of a truly reasonable woman, and the idle humour of a vain coquette, prevail by turns over her fluctuating mind :---her adventure at Miss Forward's came fresh into her head ;---she was in some moments angry with Mr. Truworth for offering his advice ; in others, more angry with herself, for not having taken it.---She remained in this perplexity till a servant, finding it grew late, and that his master did not sup at home, came in, and asked her if she would not please to have the cloth laid, to which she answered, with all her heart ; on which, the table being immediately spread, she eat of something that was there, and soon after went to bed, where, 'tis probable, she lost in sleep, both all the pleasure and the pain of her past meditations.

Mr. Goodman was all this while, as well for several succeeding days also, busily employed on an affair no less disagreeable than it was new to him ; but by the diligence and adroitness of his lawyer, he got the affidavits, the warrant, and every thing necessary for the intended prosecution of Marplus and lady Mellasin, ready much sooner, than many others would have done, or he himself had expected.

The fatigue and perplexity he was under was indeed very great, as may be easily supposed, yet did it not render him neglectful of Miss Betsy :---she had desired^d him to speak to her brother on her account, and he did so the first opportunity,-- not as if the thing had been mentioned by her, but as if

if he, in the present situation of his family, thought her removal convenient.

Mr. Thoughtless, from what his sister had said, expected he should one time or other be spoke more plainly to upon that subject, had prepared himself with an answer ;--he told Mr. Goodman, that nothing could have been more satisfactory to him, than to have his sister with him, if her being so were any ways proper ;--“ but,” said he, “ as I
“ am a single man, I shall have a crowd of gay
“ young fellows continually coming to my house,
“ and I cannot answer that all of them would be
“ able to behave with that strict decorum, which
“ I should wish to see always observed towards a
“ person so near to me :--her presence, perhaps,
“ might be some check upon them, and theirs no
“ less disagreeable to her.--In fine, Mr. Good-
“ man,” continued he, “ it is a thing wholly in-
“ consistent with that freedom I propose to live
“ in, and I would not have her think on it.”

It was not that this gentleman wanted natural affection for his sister, that he refused what he was sensible she so much desired, but he was at present so circumstanced, that to have complied would, under a shew of kindness, have done her a real injury.-- He had brought with him a young and very beautiful mistress from Paris, of whom he was fond, and jealous to that extravagant degree, that he could scarce suffer her a moment from his sight :--he had promised her the sole command of his house and servants, and that she should appear as his wife in all respects except the name.--How could he, therefore, bring home a sister, who had a right to, and doubtless would have claimed all those privileges another was already in possession of ?--And how would it have agreed with the character of a virtuous young lady, to have lived in the same house with a woman kept by her brother as his mistress ?

But

But this was a secret miss Betsy was as yet wholly unacquainted with; and when Mr. Goodman repeated to her what had passed between them, on her score, and the excuse her brother had made for not complying with the proposal, she thought it so weak, and withal so unkind, that she could not forbear bursting into tears: — the good-natured old gentleman could not see her thus afflicted without being extremely concerned, and saying many kind things to pacify her: — “Do not weep,” said he, “I will make it my business, — nay my study, to procure some place where you may be boarded to your satisfaction.” — “I beg, sir, that you will not mistake my meaning, — I do assure you, sir, I am not wanting in sensibility of your goodness to all our family, and to me in particular. — I must indeed be strangely stupid not to think myself happy under the protection of a gentleman of so humane and benign a disposition. — No, sir, be persuaded there is no house in London, except that of an own brother, I would prefer to yours; — I will, therefore, with your permission, continue here, nor entertain the least thought of removing, unless some accident yet unforeseen oblige me to it.”

Mr. Goodman then told her, that he should be glad she would always do what was most for her own ease. This was all the discourse they had upon this head, and when miss Betsy began to consider seriously on the behaviour both of lady Mellasin and miss Flora, she found there was little reason for her to regret the loss of their society; — nor that she ought to think Mr. Goodman’s house less agreeable for their being out of it; — she received all such as she approved of; who had come to visit them, and by doing so were acquainted with her, and as to those, who

visited herself in particular, it was the same as ever. — Mr. Goodman's kinswoman, now his housekeeper, was a well-bred, accomplished woman, and a chearful agreeable companion; — she seemed studious to oblige her; — all the servants were ready to do every thing she desired, and it would have been difficult for her to have found any place where she could have been better accommodated, or have had more cause to be contented; and she would doubtless have thought herself more happy than she had ever been since her coming to Mr. Goodman's, if other things of a different nature had not given her some unquiet moments.

But besides the unkindness of one brother, on whom she had built the most pleasing hopes, and the indisposition of another, for whom she had a very great affection, the late behaviour of Mr. Truworth gave her much matter of mortification: — she had not seen him for upwards of a week, — she imputed this absence to the rebuff she had given him at his last visit; and though she could not avoid confessing in her heart, that she had treated him neither as a gentleman, nor a friend, yet her vanity having suggested, that he was incapable of resenting any thing she did, received a prodigious shock by the disappointment it now sustained.

C H A P. XL.

Contains only such Things as the reader might reasonably expect to have been informed of before.

IT was the fate of Miss Betty to attract a great number of admirers, but never to keep alive, for any length of time, the flame she had inspired them

them with. — Whether this was owing to the inconstancy of the addressers, or the ill conduct of the person addressed, cannot absolutely be determined; but it is highly probable, that both these motives might sometimes concur to the losing her so many conquests. — Mr. Truworth had been the most assiduous, and also the most persevering of all, that had ever yet wore her chains; — his love had compelled his judgment to pay an implicit obedience to her will; — he had submitted to humour all the little extravagancies of her temper, and affected to appear easy at what his reason could not but disapprove; — he had flattered himself, that all that was blameworthy in her would wear off by degrees, and that every error would be her last, 'till a long succession of repeated inadvertencies made him first begin to fear, and then to be convinced, that however innocent she might be in fact, her manner of behaviour would ill suit with the character he wished should always be maintained by the woman he made choice of for a wife.

His meeting her at *miss Forward's*, her obstinate persisting in going to the play with that abandoned creature, after the remonstrances he had made her on that score, — her returning home so late, and in disorder, conducted by a stranger, — in fine, what he saw himself, and had been told, concerning the proceedings of that night, gave the finishing stroke to all his hopes, that she would ever, at least while youth and beauty lasted, be brought to a just sensibility of the fashion in which she ought to act.

If the letter, contrived and sent by the mischievous *miss Flora*, had reached his hands but two days sooner, it would have had no other effect upon him, than to make him spurn the invective scroll beneath his feet, and wish to serve

the author in the same manner; but poor miss Betsey had, by her own mismanagement, prepared his heart to receive any impressions to her prejudice; yet was the scandal it contained of so gross a kind, that he could not presently give into the belief of it, — ‘ Good God!’ cried he, ‘ it is impossible; — if she has so little sense of honour, or reputation, as the lightness of her carriage makes some people too ready to imagine, her very pride is sufficient to secure her virtue: — she would not, — could not condescend to the embraces of a man, who thought so meanly of her, as to attempt the gaining her on any other score than that of marriage! — and yet,’ pursued he, after a pause, ‘ who knows, but that very pride, which seems to be her defence, may have contributed to her fall? — She has vanity enough to imagine she may act with impunity what she would condemn in others. — She might fancy, as the Poet says,

‘ That faultless form could act no crime,

‘ But heav’n, on looking on it, must forgive.’

‘ Why then,’ continued he, ‘ should the foolish remains of that tenderness I once had for her make me still hesitate to believe her guilty? — No, — no, the account before me has too much the face of truth; it is too circumstantial to be the work of meer invention. — No one would forge a lie, and at the same time present the means of detecting it to be so. — Here is the village specified, — the nurse’s name, — a particular direction how I may convince myself of the shameful truth. — There is no room to doubt.’

To strengthen the opinion he had now of her guilt, the words miss Flora had said to him, returned to his remembrance, — ‘ That there was a time when miss Betsey had trusted her with her
‘ dearest

‘ dearest secrets.’ — ‘ Her dearest secrets!’ cried he? — ‘ What secrets can a virtuous young lady have, that shun the light, and require so much fidelity in the concealment of? — No, — no, — it must be this miss Flora meant by that emphatic expression. — The other could not hide the consequence of her shameful passion from the family; — lady Mellasin and miss Flora must know it, and perhaps many more, who, while they were witnesses of the respect I paid her, laughed at the folly of my fond credulity.’

Thus at some times did he believe her no less guilty than the letter said, but at others, sentiments of a different nature prevailed, and pleaded in her favour; — her adventure with the gentleman commoner at Oxford came into his head: — ‘ If the too great gaiety of her temper,’ said he, ‘ led her into a danger, she then had courage and virtue to extricate herself out of it.’ — He also recollected several expressions she had casually let fall, testifying her disdain and abhorrence of every thing that had the least appearance of indecency; — but then relapsing into his former doubts, — ‘ Yet who,’ cried he, again, ‘ can account for accident? — she might in one unguarded moment grant what in another she would blush to think of.’

How terrible is the situation of a lover, who endeavours all he can to reconcile his reason to his passion, yet to which side soever he bends his thoughts, finds them things so diametrically opposite and incompatible, that either the one or the other must be totally renounced. — Willing therefore to take the party, which would best become his honour and reputation, mr. Truworth resolved to banish from his mind all the ideas of those amiable qualities he had admired in miss

Betsy, and remember only those which gave him occasion for disgust

But this was a task not so easy to be accomplished as he imagined ; for though the irregularity of miss Betsy's conduct was of itself sufficient to deter him from a marriage with her, yet he found he stood in need of all helps to enable him to drive that once so pleasing object entirely from his mind.

To be therefore more fully confirmed how utterly unworthy she was of his regard, than could be made by this anonymous accusation, he went in person down to Denham, where following the directions given him in the letter, the cottage where Goody Bushman lived was presently pointed out to him, by the first person he enquired of. — ' So far, at least,' said he to himself, ' the letter-writer has told truth.' — He then sent his servant with the horses to wait his return at a public house in the village, and walked towards the place he came in search of.

He found the honest countrywoman holding a child in her arms on one side of the fire, — two rosy boys were sitting opposite to her, with each a great piece of bread and butter in his hand. — At sight of a strange gentleman she got off her seat, and dropping a low curtesy, cried, ' Do you please to want my husband, sir?' — ' No,' said Mr. Truworth, ' my business is with you, if you are Mrs. Bushman.' — ' Goody Bushman, an't please you, sir,' replied she. — And then bidding the boys get further from the chimney, reached him the handsomest joint-stool her cottage afforded for him to sit down.

He told her, that he had a kinswoman, who had some thoughts of putting a child to nurse into the country, — that she had been recommended ; — ' but,' said he, ' can we have nothing to
drink

‘drink together? — What sort of liquor does this part of the world afford,’ — ‘Alack fir,’ replied she, ‘you fine gentlemen, mayhap, may like nothing but wine, and there is none to be had any nearer than Uxbridge.’ — ‘Nor cyder,’ cried he. — ‘I am afraid none good’ replied she, ‘but there is pure good ale down the lane, if your honour could drink that.’ — ‘It is all one to me,’ said Mr. Trueworth, ‘if you like it yourself.’ — Then turning to him who seemed the eldest of the two boys, ‘I suppose,’ my lad,’ continued he, ‘you can procure us a tankard of this same ale.’ — ‘Yes, fir,’ cried his mother, hastily, ‘go to Philpot’s, and bid them send a can of their best ale, and, do you hear, desire my dame to draw it herself.’ — Mr. Trueworth then gave the boy some money, and he went on his errand, prudently taking with him a large slice of bread that happened to lie upon the dresser.

‘That is a fine child you have in your lap,’ said Mr. Trueworth, ‘is it your own?’ — ‘No, fir,’ answered she, — ‘this is a young Londoner.’ — ‘Some wealthy citizen’s, I suppose,’ rejoined he. — ‘No, by my truly, fir,’ said she, ‘it has neither father nor mother, and belike must have gone to the parish, if a good sweet young lady had not taken pity of it, and given it me to nurse; and, would you think it, fir, is as kind to it, and pays as punctually for it, as if it were her own. — My husband goes up to London every month to receive the money, and she never lets him come home without it, and gives him over and above six-pence or a shilling to drink upon the road; — poor man, — he loves a sup of good ale dearly, — that’s all his fault, — though I cannot say he ever neglects his business; — he is up early and down late, and

‘ does a power of work for a little money. —
 ‘ Sir Roger Hill will employ nobody but him,
 ‘ and good reason, because he makes him take
 ‘ whatever he pleases, and that is little enough,
 ‘ God knows, for he is a hard man, and if it were
 ‘ not for my nursing, we could not make both
 ‘ ends meet, as the saying is ; — but he is our
 ‘ landlord, and we dare not disoblige him.’

This innocent countrywoman would probably have run on with the whole detail of her family affairs, if mr. Truworth, desirous of turning the tide of her communicative disposition into a channel more satisfactory to his curiosity, had not interrupted her.

‘ This is a very extraordinary charity you have
 ‘ been telling me of,’ said he, ‘ especially in a
 ‘ young lady ; — she must certainly be some-
 ‘ what of kin to the child.’ — ‘ None in the
 ‘ varsal world, sir,’ answered she, ‘ only her god-
 ‘ mother.’ — The boy now bringing in the ale,
 mr. Truworth was obliged to taste it, and testify some sort of approbation, as the good woman had praised it so much ; but he made her drink a hearty draught of it, after which, ‘ And pray,’ resumed he, ‘ what is the name of the child ?’ — ‘ O sir, replied she, the lady has given it
 ‘ her own name, Betsey ; — she is called miss
 ‘ Betsey Thoughtless herself, — though she is a
 ‘ woman grown, and might have had a child or
 ‘ two of her own ; — but you know, sir, they
 ‘ are all called miss ’till they are married.’

Mr. Truworth in the present disturbance of his thoughts making no reply, she went on : —
 ‘ She is a sweet young lady, I can tell you, sir.’
 ‘ said she ; I never saw her but once, and that
 ‘ was when I went to fetch the child, — she used
 ‘ me with so much familiarity, — not a bit proud,
 ‘ charged me to take care of her little Betsey, and
 ‘ told

‘told me, if she lived, I should keep her till she was big enough to go to school, — and told me, she would have her learn to write, and read, and work; — and then she would put her ‘prentice to a mantua-maker, or a milliner, or some such pretty trade, — and then who knows, ‘sir,’ continued she, holding up the child at arms length, and dancing it, but some great gentleman or other may fall in love with my little Betsy, and I may live to see her ride in her coach? — I warrant she will make much of her old nurse.’

‘There are many strange things happen in the world, indeed,’ said mr. Truworth, with a sigh. After which, thinking there was no further discovery to be made, he rose up to go away; but seeing the change of the money he had sent, by the boy for the beer, lie upon the table, he gave it to him, saying, ‘Here, my good boy, take this, and divide it with your brother, to buy apples.’ — Then turning to the nurse took his leave of her with this compliment, ‘Well, mrs. Bushman, I believe you are a very honest careful woman, and shall not fail to remember you whenever it comes in my way. — In the mean time, added he, putting a crown-piece into her hands, ‘take this, and make merry with your husband.’ — The poor woman was so transported, that she knew not how to thank him sufficiently, — she made twenty curtesies, — crying, ‘heaven bless you, sir; — you are a right noble gentleman I am sure. — Marry such guests come not every day.’ — And with such like expressions of gratitude, followed him till he was quite out of hearing.

What now could this enquiring lover think? — Where was the least room for any conjecture in favour of miss Betsey’s innocence, to gain en-

trance into his breast? — He had seen the child, — had heard by whom, and in what manner it was delivered: — the charge given with it, and the promises made for its future protection, and whether the nurse was really so weak as to be imposed upon by this pretence of charity, or whether bribed to impose it upon others, the fact, as related in the letter, appeared to him so plain, from every circumstance, as to admit no possibility of a doubt.

A marriage with miss Betsy was, therefore, now quite out of the question with him; — the fashion of entirely breaking with her, was the only thing that puzzled him. — Loth he was to reproach her with the cause, and equally loth to be deemed so inconstant, as to quit her without a justifiable one. — He remained in this dilemma for the space of two days, at the expiration of which, after much debating within himself, he wrote, and sent to her, by a servant, the following epistle:

TO miss BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

‘ MADAM,

‘ **T**HE very ill success I have met with, in
 ‘ the only business which brought me to this
 ‘ town, has determined me to quit it with all possible expedition, and not to think of a return,
 ‘ till I find myself in a disposition more capable of
 ‘ relishing its pleasures. You have given me,
 ‘ madam, too many instances how little agreeable
 ‘ my presence has ever been, not to convince me,
 ‘ that I stand in no need of an apology for not waiting on you in person, and that this distant way
 ‘ of taking my leave will be less unwelcome to
 ‘ you than a visit, which perhaps would only have
 ‘ interrupted your more gay amusements, and
 ‘ broke

‘broke in for some moments, on that round of pleasures, with which you are perpetually encompassed. — May you long enjoy all the felicities the fashion you chuse to live in can bestow, while I retire to solitude, and lost in contemplation, on some late astonishing occurrences, cry out with the poet :

‘There is no wonder, or else all is wonder.’

‘If I speak in riddles, a very small retrospect on some remarkable passages in your own conduct will serve for the solution ; — but that might probably be imposing on yourself too great a task. — I shall therefore trouble you no farther than to assure you, that though I cease to see you, I shall never cease to be,

‘With the most friendly wishes,

‘MADAM,

‘Your very humble servant,

‘C. TRUEWORTH.

Mr. Truworth having dispatch’d this letter, which he doubted not but would finish all his concerns with miss Betsy, thought he had nothing more to do, than to take leave of the friends he had in town, and retire to his seat in the country, and there endeavour to lose the remembrance of all that had been displeasing to him since he left it.

C H A P. XLI.

Is of very small importance, yet contains such things as the reader may expect to hear.

WHILE Mr. Truworth was employing himself in exploring the truth of miss Betsy’s imaginary crime, and hunting after secrets to render her more unworthy of his love, that young lady’s head was no less taken up with him, though
in

in a widely different manner; — she wanted not a just sense of the merits, both of his person and passion; and though a plurality of lovers, the power of flattering the timid with vain hopes, and awing the proudest into submission, seemed to her a greater triumph, than to be the wife of the most deserving man on earth, yet when she consulted her heart, she found and avowed within herself, she could part with that triumph, with less reluctance in favour of mr. Truworth, than of any other she yet had seen.

His absence, therefore, and the strange neglect he testified in not sending to acquaint her with the cause, gave her as much inquietude, as a person of her humour could be capable of feeling; — but whether it proceeded in reality from the first shootings of a growing inclination, or from that vanity, which made her dread the loss of so accomplish'd a lover, cannot be easily determined? — but to which soever of these causes it was owing, I think we may be pretty certain, that had he visited her in the situation her mind then was, he would have had no reason to complain of his reception.

She never went abroad without flattering herself with the expectation of hearing, on her return home, that he had been there, or at least that some letter or message from him had been left for her, and every disappointment involved her in fresh perplexity. — In fine, if she had considered him with half that just regard, while he continued to think her worthy of his affections, as she was beginning to do when he was endeavouring to drive all favourable ideas of her from his mind, they might both have been as happy as at present they were the contrary.

— She had been with miss Mabel, and two other ladies of her acquaintance, to see that excellent

lent comedy, called the Careless Husband : — she was very much affected with some scenes in it : — she imagined she saw herself in the character of lady Betty Modish, and mr. Trueworth in that of lord Morelove, and came home full of the most serious reflections, on the folly of indulging an idle vanity, at the expence of a man of honour and sincerity. — She was no sooner within the doors, than the letter above-mentioned was put into her hands ; — as they told her, it had been left for her in the beginning of the evening, by one of Mr. Trueworth's servants, and she knew both by the superscription, and device on the seal, that it came from that gentleman, she ran hastily up stairs to her chamber, in order to examine the contents ; but what flutterings seized her heart ! — What an universal agitation diffused itself through all her frame, on reading even the first lines of this cruel epistle ! ‘ Good heaven ! ’ cried she, ‘ going out of town, — not to return. ’ — And then having proceeded a little further ; — ‘ What, ’ added she, ‘ not see me before he goes, — sure the man is either mad, or I am in a dream. ’

Surprise, and some mixture of a tender remorse, were the first emotions of her soul ; but when she came to that part of the letter, which seemed to reflect upon her conduct, and the way in which she chose to live, her native haughtiness reassumed its former power, and turned her all into disdain and rage. — ‘ No retrospect, ’ said she, ‘ on my own behaviour, can ever justify the audacious reproaches he treats me with. — If I have been to blame, it is not his province to upbraid me with it. ’

As she was entirely ignorant of the base artifice had been put in practice against her, and was conscious of no fault mr. Trueworth had to accuse her

her of, but that of her going with miss Forward to the play, after the warning he had given her of the danger, it must be confessed, she had a right to think the provocation too slight to draw from him such resentful expressions, much less to induce him to abandon her.

‘Ungrateful man,’ said she, bursting into tears of mingled grief and spite, ‘to use me thus, when I was just beginning to entertain the kindest thoughts of him! — When I was ready to acknowledge the error I was guilty of, in not following his advice, and had resolved never to throw myself into such inconveniencies again. — ’Tis plain he never loved me, or he would not have taken so poor, — so trifling a pretence to break with me.’

Thus, for some moments, did she bewail, as it were, the ill treatment she thought she had received from him. — Then looking over the letter again, ‘With what a magisterial air,’ cried she, ‘with what an affectation of superiority does he conclude! — With the most friendly wishes my humble servant. — Good lack! — friendly! — let him carry his friendly wishes to those he may think may receive them as a favour.’

Upon revolving in her mind all the circumstances of her behaviour towards mr. Trueworth, she could find nothing, except what passed at his last visit, that could give him any occasion for disgust, and even that she looked upon as a very insufficient plea for that high resentment he now expressed, much more for his resolving to throw off a passion he had a thousand and a thousand times vowed should be as lasting as his life.

The anonymous letter sent her by miss Flora, some time since, now came fresh into her mind; — that passage in it, which insinuated, that mr.

Trueworth

Trueworth had no real design of marrying her, — that he but trifled with her, and on the arrival of her brothers would find some pretence or other to break entirely with her, seemed now to tally exactly with his present manner of proceeding. — ‘The devil,’ said she, ‘may some time speak truth, — Mr. Trueworth has but too well verified the words of that malicious girl, and what she herself then thought a falsehood is now confirmed by fact; — yet, wherefore,’ cried she again, ‘did he take all this pains, if he never loved me, — never hoped any recompence for his dissimulation, what end could he propose by practising it? — What advantage, what pleasure could it give him to affront the sister of his friend, and impose upon the credulity of a woman he had no design upon?’ — It would be endless to repeat the many contradictory surmises, which rose alternately in her distracted mind, so I shall only say, she sought, but the more she did so, the more she became incapable of fathoming the bottom of this mysterious event.

The butler was laying the cloth in the parlour for supper when she came home, — Mr. Goodman had waited for her some time, thinking she might be undressing, and now sent to desire she would come down; — but she begged to be excused, — said she could not eat, and then called for Nanny, who was the maid that usually attended her in her chamber, to come up and put her to bed.

This prating wench, who would always know the whole secrets of every body in the family, whether they thought fit to entrust her with them or not, used frequently to divert Miss Betsy with her idle stories; but it was not now in her power, — that young lady had no attention for any thing, but the object of her present meditations, which

which the other not happening to hit upon, was answered only with peevishness and ill humour.

But as every little circumstance, if any way adapted to the passion we at that time are possessed of, touches upon the jarring string, and seems a missioner from fate; an accident, the most trifling that can be imagined, served to renew in Miss Betsy, the next morning, those anxieties, which sleep had, in some measure, abated.

A ballad-singer happening to be in the street, the first thing she heard, on her waking, was these words, sung in a sonorous voice, just under her window :

‘ Young Philander woo’d me long,
‘ I was peevish, and forbad him ;
‘ I would not hear his charming song,
‘ But now I wish, I wish I had him.’

Though this was a song at that time much in vogue, and Miss Betsy had casually heard it an hundred times, yet in the humour she now was, it beat an alarm upon her heart. — It reminded her how inconsiderate she had been, and shewed the folly of not knowing how to place a just value on any thing, ’till it was lost, in such strong colours before her eyes, as one would scarce think it possible, an incident in itself so merely bagatelle could have produced.

Again she fell into very deep reveries, and divesting herself of all passion, pride, and the prejudice her vanity had but too much inspired her with, she found, that though Mr. Truworth had carried his resentment further than became a man, who loved to that degree, as he pretended to have done; yet she could no way justify herself to her brother Frank, lady Trufty, or any of those friends, who had espoused his cause, for having given him the provocation.

To

To heighten the splenetic humour she was in, Mr. Goodman, who having been taken up with his own affairs, had not mentioned Mr. Truworth to her for some days, happened this morning, as they sat at breakfast, to ask her how the courtship of that gentleman went on, and whether there was like to be a wedding, or not? — Perceiving she blushed, — hung down her head, and made no answer, — ‘Nay, — nay,’ — said he, ‘I told you long ago I would not interfere in these matters, and have less reason now than ever to do so, as your eldest brother is in town, and who is doubtless capable of advising you for the best.’ — Miss Betsy was in a good deal of confusion; — she knew not as yet whether it would be proper for her to acquaint Mr. Goodman with what had passed between Mr. Truworth and herself, or to be silent on that head, ’till she should see what a little time might bring about. — As she was thinking in what manner she should reply, Mr. Goodman’s lawyer, luckily for her relief, came in, and put an end to a discourse, which, in the present situation of her mind, she was very unfit to bear a part in.

But as if this was to be a day of continued admonitions to Miss Betsy, she was no sooner dressed, and ready to quit her chamber, than she heard Miss Mabel’s voice upon the stairs. — As that young lady was not accustomed to make her any morning visits, she was a little surprised; — she ran however to meet her, saying, ‘This is a favour I did not expect, and therefore have the more cause to thank you.’ — ‘I do not know,’ replied the other, as she entered the room, ‘whether you will think I deserve thanks or not, when you hear the business that brought me; for I assure you I am come only to chide you.’ — ‘I think,’ said Miss Betsy, with a sigh, ‘that all
‘ the

'the world takes the liberty of doing so with me ;
'but, pray, my dear,' continued she, 'how am
'I so unhappy as to deserve it from you ?'

'Why you must know,' replied Miss Mabel;
'that I have taken upon me to be the champion
'of distress'd love ; — you have broken a fine
'gentleman's heart, and I am come to tell you,
'that you must either make it whole again, as it
'was before he saw you, or repair the damage he
'has sustained by giving him your own.' — 'I
'plead not guilty,' said Miss Betsy, in a tone
somewhat more sprightly than before, 'but pray,
'who has gained so great an influence over you
'as to send you on so doughty an errand ?' — 'No,
'my dear, you are quite mistaken in the matter,'
replied the other, — 'I assure you I am not sent
'— I am only led by my own generosity, and the
'sight of poor Mr. Truworth's despair.' —
'Truworth,' cried Miss Betsy hastily, 'What do
'you mean ?' — 'I mean,' replied the other, 'to
'engage you, if the little rhetoric I am mistress
'of can prevail on you to consider, that while we
'use a man of sense and honour ill, we do ourselves
'a real injury. — The love our beauty has inspired,
'may, for a time, secure our power, but it will
'grow weaker by degrees, and every little coquette
'air we give ourselves, lessen the value of our
'charms. — I know there is at present some very
'great brulée between you and Mr. Truworth ;
'— he is a match every way deserving of you, —
'he has the approbation of all your friends, and I
'have heard you acknowledge, you are not insen-
'sible of his merit ; to what end then do you study
'to perplex and give unnecessary pain to a heart,
'which you, according to all appearances, will
'one day take a pride in rendering happy ?'

'This is an extreme fine harangue, indeed,'
replied Miss Betsy, 'but I would fain know for
what

‘ what reason it is directed to me ; — if Mr. Truworth imagines I have used him ill, I think it no proof of his understanding, to make a proclamation of it ; — but, for heaven’s sake, how came you to be the confidante of his complaints ? ’

‘ Indeed I have not that honour,’ said Miss Mabel ; ‘ finding myself a little ill this morning, I thought the air would do me good, so went into the park, taking only a little girl with me, who lives at the next door, because I would not go quite alone ; being in the deshabille you see, I crossed the grass, and was passing towards the back of the bird-cage walk, where who should I see among the trees but Mr. Truworth, if I may call the object that then presented itself to me by that name ; for indeed, miss Betsy, the poor gentleman seems no more than the shadow of himself. — He saw me at a distance, and I believe would have avoided me, but perceiving my eyes were upon him, cleared up his countenance, as well as he was able, and accosted me with the usual salutations of the morning. — It is somewhat surprising, madam,’ said he, with an air of as much gallantry as he could assume, ‘ to find a lady so justly entitled to the admiration of the world, as Miss Mable is, shun the gay company of the Mall, and choose an unfrequented walk, like this.’ — ‘ I might retort the same exclamation of surprise,’ replied I, ‘ at so unexpectedly meeting with Mr. Truworth here.’

‘ After this, as you know, my dear,’ continued she, ‘ I have lately, on your account, had the pleasure pretty often of Mr. Truworth’s company, I took the liberty to ask him where he had buried himself, that I had not seen him for so many days : ’ — to which he answered, not without

out a confusion, which I saw he attempted; tho' in vain, to conceal from me. — 'Yes, madam, 'I have indeed been buried from all pleasure, — 'have been swallowed up in affairs little less tormenting than those of the grave; — but,' added he, 'they are now over, and I am preparing to return to my country seat, where I hope to re-enjoy that tranquility, which, since my leaving it, has been pretty much disturbed.'

'Nothing could equal my astonishment, at hearing him speak in this manner: — 'To your country seat!' cried I; 'not to continue there for any long time!' — 'I know not as yet, madam,' replied he, and then, after a pause, 'perhaps for ever,' added he. — 'Bless me,' said I, 'this is strange indeed, — Miss Betsey did not tell me a word of it, and I saw her but last night.' — 'She might not then know it, madam,' answered he; 'but if she had, I am not vain enough to imagine, she would think a trifle, such as my departure, worth the pains of mentioning.'

'I then,' pursued Miss Mabel, 'endeavoured to rally him out of this humour. — After having told him, I had a better opinion of your understanding and generosity, than to be capable of believing you thought so lightly of his friendship and affection, I added, that this was only some little pique between you, — some jealous whim; but he replied to all I said on this subject with a very grave air, pretended business, and took his leave somewhat abruptly, for a man of that politeness, I had till now always observed in him.'

'He carries it with a high hand, indeed,' cried Miss Betsey; — 'but it is no matter, — I shall give myself no trouble whether he stays in town, — or whether he goes into the country, — or
whether

‘whether I ever see him more. — What! — does the man think to triumph over me?’

‘I do not believe that is the case with Mr. Trueworth,’ said the discreet Miss Mabel; ‘but I know it is the way of many men to recriminate in this manner, — and pray when they do, who can we blame for it but ourselves in giving them the occasion? — For my part, I should think it an affront to myself to encourage the addresses of a person, I did not look upon worthy of being treated with respect.’

She urged many arguments to convince Miss Betsy of the vanity and ill consequences of trifling with an honourable and sincere passion, which tho’ no more than what that young lady had already made use of to herself, and was fully persuaded in the truth of, she was not very well pleased to hear from the mouth of another.

Though these two ladies perfectly agreed in their sentiments of virtue and reputation, yet their dispositions and behaviour in the affairs of love were as widely different, as any two persons possibly could be; — and this it was, which during the course of their acquaintance, gave frequent interruptions to that harmony between them, which the mutual esteem they had for each other’s good qualities, would otherwise have rendered perpetual.

C H A P. XLII.

Is multum in parvo.

THERE is an unaccountable pride in human nature, which often gets the better of our justice, and makes us espouse what we know within ourselves is wrong, rather than appear to be set right by any reason, except our own.

Miss

Miss Betsey had too much of this unhappy propensity in her composition. — A very little reflection enabled her to see clearly enough the mistakes she sometimes fell into; but she could not bear they should be seen by others. — Miss Mabel was not only in effect the most valuable of all the young ladies she conversed with, but was also the most esteemed and loved by her, yet was she less happy and delighted in her company, than in that of several others, for whom her good sense would not suffer her to have the least real regard. — The truth is, that though she was very well convinced of her errors, in relation to those men who professed themselves her admirers, yet she loved those errors in herself, — thought they were pretty, and became her; — and therefore as she could not as yet resolve to alter her mode of behaviour, was never quite easy in the presence of any one, who acted with a prudence she would not be at the pains to imitate.

There were two young ladies, who had an apartment in the palace of St. James's, their father having an office there, who exactly suited with her in the most volatile of her moments: — they had wit, — spirit, and were gay almost to wildness, without the least mixture of libertinism, or indecency. — How perfectly innocent they were, is not the business of this history to discuss, but they preserved as good a reputation as their neighbours, and were well respected in all public places.

There it was Miss Betsey chiefly found an asylum from those perplexing thoughts, which in spite of her pride, and the indifference she had for mankind, would sometimes intrude upon her mind on Mr. Truworth's account; — here she was certain of meeting a great variety of company; — here was all the news and scandal the town could furnish; — here was musick, — dancing, — feasting, flattery;

attery ; — in fine, here was every thing, that was an enemy to care and contemplation.

Among the number of those, who fill'd the circle of these two court belles, there was a gentleman named Munden : — he appeared extremely charmed with miss Betsy at first sight, and after having informed himself of the particulars of her family and fortune, took an opportunity, as he was conducting her home one night, to intreat she would allow him to pay his respects to her where she lived. — This was a favour miss Betsy was never very scrupulous of granting, and consented now the more readily, as she thought the report of a new lover would gall Mr. Truworth, who, she heard by some, who had very lately seen him, was not yet gone out of town.

Mr. Munden, to testify the impatience of his love, waited on her the very next day, as soon as he thought dinner would be over, at Mr. Goodman's : — he had the satisfaction of finding her alone ; but fearing she might not long be so, suffered but a very few minutes to escape before he acquainted her with the errand on which he came : — the terms in which he declared himself her admirer, were as pathetic as could be made use of for the purpose ; — but though this was no more than Miss Betsy had expected, and would have been strangely mortified if disappointed, by his entertaining her on any other score, yet she affected, at first, to treat it with surprise, and then, on his renewing his protestations, to answer all he said with a sort of raillery, in order to put him to the more expence of oaths and asseverations.

It is certain, that whoever pretended to make his addressee to Miss Betsy, stood in need of being previously provided with a good stock of repartees, to silence the sarcasms of the witty fair, as well

well as fine speeches to engage her to more seriousness. — Mr. Munden often found himself at his *ne plus ultra*, but was not in the least disconcerted at it ; — he was a courtier ; — he was accustomed to attend at the levees of the great, and knew very well, that persons in power seldom failed to exercise it over those, who had any dependance on them ; and looking on the case of a lover with his mistress, as the same with one who is soliciting for a pension, or employment, had armed himself with patience, to submit to every thing his tyrant should inflict, in the hope, that it would one day be his turn to impose laws, — according to the poet's words :

‘ The humblest lover, when he lowest lies,
 ‘ But kneels to conquer, and but falls to rise.’

Miss Betsy was indeed a tyrant, but a very gentle one ; she always mingled some sweet with the sharpness of her expressions : — if in one breath she menaced despair, in the next she encouraged hope, and her very repulses were sometimes so equivocal, as that they might be taken for invitations ; — she played with her lovers, as she did with her monkey, but expected more obedience from them ; — they must look gay or grave, according as she did so ; — their humour, and even their very motions must be regulated by her influence, as the waters by the moon : — in fine, an exterior homage was the chief thing to be required ; for as to the heart, her own being yet untouched, she gave herself but little trouble how that of her lovers stood affected.

Mr. Munden, with less love, perhaps, than many, who had addressed her, knew better how to suit himself to her humour ; — he could act over all the delicacies of the most tender passion, without being truly sensible of any of them, and though he wished, in reality, nothing so much as
 attaining

attaining the affections of miss Betsy, yet wishing it without those timid inquietudes, — those jealous doubts, — those perplexing anxieties, which suspense inflicts on a more solid mind, he was the more capable of behaving towards her in the way she liked.

He was continually inviting her to some party of pleasure or other, — he gallanted her to all public shews, — he treated her with the most exquisite dainties of the season, and presented her with many curious toys. — Being to go with these ladies, at whose appointment he first commenced his acquaintance with her, and some other company to a masquerade, he waited on her some hours before the time, and taking out of his pocket a ruby, cut in the shape of a heart, and illustrated with small brilliants round about, — ‘I beg, madam,’ said he, ‘you will do me the honour of wearing this to-night, either on your sleeve, or breast, or some other conspicuous place. — There will be a great deal of company, and some perhaps in the same habit as yourself, — this will direct my search, prevent my being deceived by appearances, which otherwise I might be, and prophanely pay my worship to some other, instead of the real goddess of my soul.’

This was the method he took to ingratiate himself into the favour of his mistress, and it had the effect, if not to make her love him, at least to make her charmed with this new conquest, much more than she had been with several of her former ones, though never so much deserving her esteem.

In the midst of these gay scenes, however, Mr. Trueworth came frequently into her head. — To find he was in town, made her flatter herself, that he lingered here on her account; and that, in spite

of all his resolution, he had not courage to leave the same air she breathed in ;— she fancied, that if she could meet him, or any accident throw him in her way, she should be able to rekindle all his former flames, and render him as much her slave as ever. — With this view she never went abroad without casting her eyes about, in search of him ; — nay she sometimes even condescended to pass by the house where he was lodged, in hopes of seeing him either going in or out, or from some one or other of the windows ; but chance did not befriend her inclinations this way, nor put it in her power again to triumph over a heart, the sincerity of which she had but too ill treated, when devoted to her.

In the mean time Mr. Goodman, in spite of the perplexities his own affairs involved him in, could not help feeling a great concern for those of miss Betsy ; — he knew that Mr. Truworth had desisted his visits to her, — that she had got a new lover, who he could not find had consulted the permission of any one but herself, to make his addressee to her ; — the late hours she kept, seldom coming home 'till some hours after the whole family, except the servant who sat up for her, were in bed, gave him also much matter of uneasiness, and he thought it his duty to talk seriously to her on all these points.

He began with asking her, how it happened that he had not seen Mr. Truworth for so long a time ? To which she replied, with the utmost indifference, that she took some things ill from that gentleman, and that, perhaps, he might have some subject of complaint against her, — ‘ Therefore,’ said she, ‘ as our humours did not very well agree, it was best to break off conversation.’

He then questioned her concerning Mr. Munden ; — ‘ I hope,’ said he, ‘ you have taken care to

‘to inform yourself as to his character and circumstances.’ — ‘No truly, sir,’ answered she, with the same careless air as before, ‘as I never intend to be the better or the worse for either, I give myself no pain about what he is.’ — Mr. Goodman shook his head, and was going to reason with her, on the ill consequences of such a behaviour, when some company coming in, broke off, for a time, all further discourse between them.

C H A P. XLIII.

Shews Miss Betsy left entirely to her own management, and the cause of it, with some other particulars.

MR. Goodman, who had been a little vexed at being interrupted, in the remonstrances he thought so highly necessary should be made to Miss Betsy, took an opportunity of renewing them the next morning, in the strongest expressions he was master of.

Miss Betsy, with all her wit, had little to say for herself, in answer to the serious harangue made to her by Mr. Goodman, on her present fashion of behaviour; — her heart avowed the justice of his reproofs, but her humour, too tenacious of what pleased itself, and too impatient of controul, would not suffer her to obey the dictates either of his or her own reason. — She knew very well the tender regard he had for her, on the account of her deceased father, and that all he spoke was calculated for her good; but then it was a good she was not at present ambitious of attaining, and thought it the privilege of youth to do whatever it listed, provided the rules of virtue were unfringed, so that all that he could get from her was, — that her amusements were inno-

cent, — that she meant no harm in any thing she did, — that it was dull for her to sit at home alone, and when in company could not quit it abruptly, on any consideration of hours.

Mr. Goodman found, that to bring her to a more just sense of what was really her advantage, would be a task impossible for him to accomplish, and began heartily to wish she were under the care of some person, who had more leisure to argue with her, on points so essential to her happiness: — he told her, that he indeed had feared his house would be too melancholly a recess for her, since the revolution that had lately happened in his family, and therefore wished some more proper place could be found for her; — ‘ And for such a one,’ said he, ‘ I shall make it my business to enquire, — and there seems not only a necessity for my doing so, but that you should also choose another guardian; for as soon as the present unlucky business I am engaged in shall be over, it is my resolution to break up house-keeping, — leave my business to my nephew, Ned Goodman, whom I expect by the first ship that arrives from the East-Indies, and, having once seen him settled, retire, and spend the remainder of my days in the country.’

The melancholly accents with which Mr. Goodman uttered these words, touched Miss Betty very much; — she expressed, in terms the most affectionate, the deep concern it gave her, that he had any cause to withdraw from a way of life, to which he had so long been accustomed; but added, that if it must be so, she knew no person so proper, in whose hands the little fortune she was mistress of should be entrusted, as those of her brother Thoughtless, if he would vouchsafe to take that trouble upon him.

“There

‘There is no doubt to be made of that, I believe,’ replied Mr. Goodman, ‘and I shall speak to him about it the first time I see him.’——

They had some farther talk on Miss Betsy’s affairs, and that young lady found, he had very largely improved the portion bequeathed her by her father; for which, in the first emotions of her gratitude, she was beginning to pour forth such acknowledgments, as he thought it too much to hear, and interrupted her, saying, he had done no more, than his duty obliged him to do, and could not have answered to himself the omission of any part of it.

It is so natural for people to love money, even before they know what to do with it, that it is not to be wondered at, that Miss Betsy, now arrived at an age capable of relishing all the delicacies of life, should be transported at finding so considerable, and withal so unexpected, an augmentation of her fortune, which was no less than one third of what her father had left her.

The innate pleasure of her mind, on this occasion, diffused itself through all her form, and gave a double lustre to her eyes and air, so that she went with charms new pointed to a ball that night, for which the obsequious Mr. Munden had presented her with a ticket; — but though she had all the respect in the world for Mr. Goodman, and indeed a kind of filial love for him, yet she had it not in her power to pay that regard to his admonitions she ought to have done; — she came not home till between one and two o’clock in the morning, but was extremely surprized to find, that when she did so, the knocker was taken off the door; a thing which, in complaisance to her, had never before been done, till she came in, how late soever she stayed abroad; — she was, nevertheless, much more surprized, as well as

troubled, when on the first rap her chairmen gave, a footman, who waited in the hall for her return, immediately opened the door, and told her, with all the marks of sorrow in his countenance, that his master had been suddenly taken ill, and that his physician, as well as Mrs. Barns, the house-keeper, had given strict orders, there should be no noise made in the house, the former having said his life depended on his being kept perfectly quiet.

It is not to be doubted, but that, on this information, she went with as little noise as possible up to her chamber, where Nanny, as she was putting her to bed, confirmed to her what the footman had said, and added, that she had heard the doctor tell Mrs. Barns, as he was going out, that he was very apprehensive his patient's disorder would not be easily removed.

Distempers of the body, which arise from those of the mind, are indeed much more difficult to be cured, than those which proceed from meer natural causes. — Mr. Goodman's resentment for the ill usage he had sustained, from a woman he had so tenderly loved, awhile kept up his spirits, and hindered him from feeling the cruel sting, which preyed upon his vitals, and insensibly slackened the strings of life; but the first hurry being over, and the lawyer having told him, that every thing was drawn up, and his cause would be brought before the commons in a few days, he sunk beneath the apprehensions, — the thoughts of appearing before the doctors of the civil law, to several of whom he was known, to prove his own dishonour, — the talk of the town, — the whispers, — the grimaces, — the ridicule, which he was sensible this affair would occasion when exposed, — the pity of some, — and the contempt he must expect from others; — all these things, though little re-
garded

garded by him while at a distance, now they came more near at hand, and just ready to fall upon him, gave him such a shock, as all the courage he had assumed was not sufficient to enable him to resist.

He was seized at once with a violent fit of an apoplexy at a coffee-house, where a surgeon being immediately sent for, he was let blood, as is common in such cases. — This operation soon recovered him, so far as speech and motion, but reason had not power to reassume her seat in his disordered brain, for many hours; — he was brought home in a chair, — the surgeon attended him, — saw him put into bed, and sat by him a considerable time, but finding him rather worse than better, told Mrs. Barns, he durst not proceed any further, and that they must have recourse to a physician, which was accordingly done.

This gentleman, who was esteemed the most skilful of his profession, hearing Mr. Goodman frequently cry out, ‘ My heart! — my heart!’ laid his hand upon his bosom, and found, by the extraordinary pulsation there, that he had symptoms of an inward convulsion, wrote a prescription, and ordered he should be kept extremely quiet.

Towards morning he grew more composed, and by degrees recovered the use of his understanding as perfectly as ever, but his limbs were so much weakened by that severe attack the fit had made upon him, that he could not sit up in his bed without support. — The physician, however, at his next visit, had great hopes of him, — said his ‘imbecility’ proceeded only from a fever of the nerves, which he doubted not but to abate, and that he would be well in a few days. — How uncertain, — how little to be depended upon is art, in some cases! — Mr. Goodman felt that within himself, which gave the lie to all appearances,

pearances, and fully convinced that the hand of death had seized upon his heart, would not defer a moment putting all his affairs in such a posture, as should leave no room for contention among the parties concerned, after his decease :—he began with sending for Mr. Thoughtless, and consigned over to him the whole fortunes of Mr. Francis, and Miss Betsey, the latter being first obliged, as not being yet of age, to chuse him for her guardian in form. — Having thus acquitted himself, in the most honourable manner, of the trust reposed in him, for the children of his friend, he considered what was best to be done, in relation to those of his own blood. — By his death, the intended process against lady Mellasin would be prevented, and consequently the third part of his effects would devolve on her, as being the widow of a citizen ;—he, therefore, having consulted with his lawyer, if such a thing were practicable, made a deed of gift to his nephew, Mr. Edward Goodman, of all his money in the bank, stocks, and other public funds. — After this, he made his will, and the lawyer perceiving he had left but few legacies, asked him, how the residue of what he is possessed of should be disposed ; to which he replied, ‘ Greatly as I have been wronged by lady Mellasin, I would not have her to starve :— ‘ — I have been calculating in my mind to what her dividend may amount, and believe it will be sufficient to enable her to live in that retired manner, which best becomes her age and character.’

Mr. Goodman, having thus settled all his affairs in this world, began to make such preparations for another, as are necessary for the best of men. — In the mean time, as the least noise was disturbing to him, it was judged proper that Miss Betsey, who could not live without company, should

should remove. — No boarding-place to her mind being yet found, and having done with all hopes of living with her brother, (as she was by this time informed of the true reasons he had for her not doing so,) took lodgings in Jermyn-street, and finding the interest of her fortune, through the good management of her late guardian, would allow it, hired a maid and foot-boy to wait upon her.

The adieu she received from Mr. Goodman was the most tender and affectionate that could be ; — she was very much moved with it, and sincerely lamented the loss she should sustain of so honest and worthy a friend ; but her natural sprightliness would not suffer any melancholly reflections to dwell long upon her mind, and the hurry she was in of sending messages to all her acquaintance, with an account of the change of her situation, very much contributed to dissipate them. — This important business was scarce over, and she well settled in her new habitation, when one of Mr. Goodman's footmen brought her a letter from her brother Frank, which had been just left for her by the post. — It contained these lines :

TO MISS BETSY THOUGHTLESS.

My dear sister,
I H A V E been snatched from the brink of the grave, by the skill of one of the best physicians in the world, and the tender, and, I may say, maternal care of our most dear, and truly valuable friend, the excellent lady Trusty. — The first use I made of my recovered health, is to give an account of it to those, whom, I flatter myself, will be obliged by the intelligence. — I thank you for the many kind wishes you
have

' have sent me, during the course of my illness,
 ' but hoped to have seen, before now, another
 ' name subscribed to your letters, than that you
 ' received from your birth; and cannot help say-
 ' ing, I am a little surpris'd, that in the two last
 ' you favoured me with, you have been entirely
 ' silent on a subject you know I have always had
 ' very much at heart. — I have also very lately
 ' received a letter from Mr. Truworth, wherein
 ' he tells me, he is going to his country seat, —
 ' expresses the most kind concern for me, but
 ' mentions not the least syllable of you, or of his
 ' passion. — I fear, my dear sister, there is some
 ' misunderstanding between you, which would
 ' very much trouble me, for your sake especially,
 ' but I shall defer what I have to say to you, till
 ' I have the pleasure of seeing you. — I am not
 ' yet judg'd fit to sit my horse for so long a jour-
 ' ney, and the places in the stage-coach are all
 ' taken for to-morrow, but have secured one in
 ' Thursday's coach, and expect to be with you on
 ' Saturday. — I accompany this to you with one
 ' to my brother, and another to Mr. Goodman, so
 ' have no occasion to trouble you with my com-
 ' pliments to either. — Farewell. — I think I
 ' need not tell you, that I am,

' With an unfeigned regard,

' My dear sister,

' Your very affectionate brother,

' And humble servant,

' F. THOUGHTLESS.'

' P. S. Sir Ralph and lady Trusty are both from
 ' home at this time, or I am certain their good
 ' wishes, if no more, would have joined mine,
 ' that you may never cease to enjoy whatever it
 ' becomes you to desire. — My dear Betsy,
 ' adieu.'

The

The joy, which this letter would have afforded Miss Betsy had been compleat, if not somewhat abated by the apprehensions of what her brother would say to her, when he should find she was indeed intirely broke off with Mr. Truworth; but as the reader may probably desire to know in what manner he pass'd his time after that event, and the motives which induced him to stay in London, it is now highly proper to say something of both.

C H A P. XLIV.

The author is under some apprehensions, will not be quite pleasing to the humour of every reader.

IT is certain that Mr. Truworth, at the time of his writing his last letter to Miss Betsy, was fully determined to go into the country, and was already beginning to make such preparations, as he found necessary for his journey, when an accident of a very singular nature put a sudden stop to them, and to his intentions.

He was one day just dressed, and going out, in order to dine with some company, for he now chose to be as little alone as possible, when one of his servants delivered a letter to him, which he said was brought by a porter, who waited below for an answer. — As the superscription was in a woman's hand, and he was not accustomed to receive any billets from that sex, he broke it open, with a kind of greedy curiosity, and found in it these lines:

TO CHARLES TRUEWORTH, Esq;

SIR,

I Am a woman of fortune, family, and an unblemished character, — very young, and most
people

‘ people allow not disagreeable : — you have
 ‘ done me the greatest injury in the world with-
 ‘ out knowing it ; but I take you to be more a
 ‘ man of honour, than not to be willing to make
 ‘ what reparation is in your power. — If the good
 ‘ opinion I have of you does not deceive me, you
 ‘ will readily accept this challenge, and not fail
 ‘ to meet me about eleven o’clock to-morrow in
 ‘ the morning, at General Tatton’s bench, oppo-
 ‘ site Rosamond’s Pond, in St. James’s Park, —
 ‘ there to hear such interrogatories as I shall think
 ‘ fit to make you, and on your sincere answer to
 ‘ which, depends the whole future peace, if not
 ‘ the life of her, who at present, can only sub-
 ‘ scribe herself,

‘ In the greatest confusion,

‘ SIR,

‘ Your unfortunate,

‘ And impatient

‘ INCOGNITA.’

Mr. Trueworth was a good deal surprized, but had no occasion to consult long with himself in what manner it would become a man of his years to behave in such an adventure, and therefore sat down and immediately wrote an answer in these terms :

To the fair INCOGNITA.

‘ *Madam,*

‘ **T**HOUGH a challenge from an unknown an-
 ‘ tagonist might be rejected without any dan-
 ‘ ger of incurring the imputation of cowardise ;
 ‘ and, besides, as the combat to which I am in-
 ‘ vited is to be that of words, in which your sex
 ‘ are generally allowed to excel, I have not any
 ‘ sort of chance for overcoming ; yet to shew that
 ‘ I dare

‘ I dare encounter a fine woman at any weapon,
‘ and shall not repine at being foiled, will not
‘ fail to give you the triumph you desire, and to
‘ that end will wait on you exactly at the time
‘ and place mentioned in yours, — till when you
‘ may rest satisfied that I am,

‘ With the greatest impatience,

‘ The obliging *INCOGNITA*’s

‘ Most devoted servant,

‘ C. TRUEWORTH.’

Though Mr. Truworth had not only heard of, but also experienced, when on his travels abroad, some adventures of a parallel nature with this, yet as it never had entred into his head, that the English ladies took this method of introducing themselves to the acquaintance of those they were pleased to favour, the challenge of the *incognita*, — who she was, — where she had seen him, — what particular action of his had merited her good graces, and a thousand other conjectures, all tending to the same object, very much engrossed his mind. — Indeed he was glad to encourage any thoughts, which served to drive those of Miss Betsy thence, whose idea, in spite of all his endeavours, and her supposed unworthiness, would sometimes intervene, and poison the sweets of his most jovial moments among his friends.

His curiosity, for it cannot be said he was as yet instigated by a warmer passion, rendered him however very careful not to suffer the hour mentioned in the lady’s letter to escape; but though he was at the place somewhat before the time, she was the first, and already waited his approach. — As he turned by the corner of the pond, he began to reflect, that as she had given him no signal, whereby she might be known, he might possibly

mistake for his Incognita some other, whom chance might have directed to the bench, and was somewhat at a loss how to accost her, in such a manner, as that the compliment might not make him be looked upon as rude or mad, by a person who had no reason to expect it from him.

But the lady, who, it is likely, was also sensible she had been a little wanting in this part of the assignation, soon eased him of the suspense he was in, by rising from her seat, as he drew near, and saluting him with these words, — ‘How perfectly obliging,’ said she, ‘is this punctuality?’ — ‘It almost flatters me I shall have no reason to repent the step I have taken.’ — ‘A person who is injured,’ replied Mr. Trueworth, ‘has doubtless a right to complain; and if I have, though never so unwarily, been guilty of any wrong, cannot be too hasty, nor too zealous in the reparation; — be pleased therefore, madam, to let me know the nature of my offence, and be assured, that the wishes of my whole heart shall be to expiate it.

In concluding these words, one of her gloves being off, he took hold of her hand, and kiss’d it with either a real, or a seeming warmth. — ‘Take care what you say,’ cried she, ‘lest I exact more from you, than is in your power to perform; but let us sit down,’ pursued she, suffering him still to keep her hand in his, ‘and begin to fulfil the promise you have made, by satisfying me in some few points I have to ask, with the same sincerity as you would answer heaven.’ — ‘Be assured I will,’ said he, putting her hand a second time to his mouth, ‘and this shall be the book on which I will swear to every article.’

‘First then,’ demanded she, ‘Are you married, or contracted?’ — ‘Neither, by all that’s dear,’

‘ dear,’ said he. — ‘ Have you no attachment,’ resumed she, ‘ to any particular lady, that should hinder your engaging with another?’ — ‘ Not any upon my honour,’ answered he.

I should before now have acquainted my reader, that the lady was not only masqued, but also close muffled in her hood, that Mr. Truworth could discover no part even of the side of her face; which, growing weary of this examination, he took an opportunity to complain of. — ‘ Why this unkind reserve, my charming Incognita?’ said he, ‘ I have heard of penitents, who, while confessing crimes they were ashamed of, kept their faces hid, but I believe there never was a confessor who concealed himself, — permit me to see to whom I am laying open my heart, and I shall do it with pleasure.’ — ‘ That cannot be,’ answered she, ‘ even for the very reason you have alledged : — I have something to confess to you, would sink me into the earth with shame, did you behold the mouth that utters it. — In fine, I love you, and after having told you so, can you expect I will reveal myself.’ — ‘ Else how can I return the bounty as I ought,’ cried he, ‘ or you be assured you have not lavished your favours on an insensible or ungrateful heart?’

‘ Time may do much,’ said she; — ‘ a longer and more free conversation with you may perhaps embolden me to make a full discovery of my face to you, as I have already done of my heart.’ — Mr. Truworth then told her, that the place they were in would allow but very few freedoms, and added, that if he were really so happy as she flattered him he was, she must permit him to wait on her, where he might have an opportunity of testifying the sense he had of so unhopd, and as yet so unmerited a blessing.

‘Alas!’ cried she, ‘I am quite a novice in affignations of this sort, — I have so entire a dependance on your honour, that I dare meet you any where, provided you give me your solemn promise not to take any measures for knowing who I am, nor make any attempts to oblige me to unmask, till I have assumed courage enough to become visible of my own free will.’

Mr. Truworth readily enough gave her the promise she exacted from him, not at all doubting but he should be easily able to find means to engage her consent for the satisfaction of his curiosity, in these points. — ‘Well then,’ said she, ‘it belongs to you to name a place proper for these secret interviews.’

On this, after a little pause, he answered, that since she judged it inconvenient for him to wait upon her at home, or any other place where she was known, he would be about the close of day at a certain coffee-house, which he named to her. — ‘Where,’ continued he, ‘I will attend your commands, and on your condescending to stop at the door in a hackney coach, will immediately come forth, and conduct you to a house secure from all danger of discovery.’ — ‘She hesitated not a moment to comply with his proposal; yet in the same breath she did so, affected to be under some fears, which before she had not made the least shew of;’ — said, ‘she hoped he would not abuse the confidence she reposed in him, — that he would take no advantage of the weakness she had shewn, — that though she loved him with the most tender passion, and could not have lived without revealing it to him, yet her inclinations were innocent, and pure as those of a vestal virgin, and a great deal more stuff of the like sort, which though Mr. Truworth could scarce refrain from smiling at, yet he answered

wit

with all the seriousness imaginable, — ‘ I should be unworthy, madam, of the affection you honour me with,’ said he, ‘ were I capable of acting towards you in any manner unbecoming of you, or of myself; and you may depend I shall endeavour to regulate my desires, so as to render them agreeable to yours.’

After some further discourse of the like nature, she rose up, and took her leave, insisting at parting, that he should not attempt to follow her, or take any method to find out what way she went; which injunction he punctually obeyed, not stirring from the bench, till she was quite out of sight.

This adventure prodigiously amused him; — never, in his whole life, had he met with any thing he knew so little how to judge of. — She had nothing of the air of a woman of the town, and besides, he knew it was not the interest of those who made a trade of their favours, to dispense them in the manner she seemed to intend; — nor could he think her a person of the condition and character her letter intimated. He could not conceive, that any of those he was acquainted with, would run such lengths for the gratification of their passion, especially for a man, who had not taken the least pains to inspire it. — Sometimes he imagined it was a trick put upon him, in order to make trial how far his vanity would extend in boasting of it; — it even came into his head, that Miss Betsy herself might get somebody to personate the amorous Incognita, for no other purpose than to divert herself, and disappoint his high raised expectation; but this last conjecture dwelt not long upon him: — he had heard she now entertained another lover, with whom she was very much taken up, and; consequently, would not give herself so much trouble about

one, who had entirely quitted her. — In fine, he knew not what to think, as he could not tell how to believe he had made such an impression upon any woman, without knowing it, as the Incognita pretended, he was apt to imagine he should neither see nor hear any more of her. — This uncertainty, however, employed his mind the whole day, and he was no less impatient for the proof, than he would have been, if actually in love with his invisible mistress.

The wished for hour at last arrived, and he waited not long before he was eased of one part of his suspense, by being told, a lady in a hackney coach enquired for him : — he was extremely pleased to find, at least, he had not been imposed upon, by a trick of any of his frolicksome companions, and immediately flew to the coach side, where seeing it was indeed his Incognita, he jumped directly in, with a transport, which, doubtless was very agreeable to her.

Though he had often heard some gentleman speak of houses, where two persons of different sexes might at any time be received, and have the privilege of entertaining each other with all the freedom and privacy they could desire, yet as he had never been accustomed to intrigues of this nature, and thought he should have no occasion to make use of such places, he had not given himself the trouble of asking where they might be found, therefore had now no other resource than either a tavern or a bagnio, the latter of which he looked upon, for more reasons than one, as the most commodious of the two, so ordered the coachman to drive to one in Silver-street ; — he excused himself at the same time to the lady, for not having been able to provide a better asylum for her reception ; but she appeared perfectly content, — told him, she had put herself under
his

his care, — relied upon his honour and discretion, — and left all to his direction.

Being come into the bagnio, they were shewed into a handsome large room, with a bed-chamber within it. — Mr. Truworth had his eye on every thing in an instant, and finding all was right, ordered a supper to be prepared, and then told the waiter, he would dispence with his attendance, till it was ready. — As soon as he found himself alone with his Incognita, ‘Now, my angel,’ said he, embracing her, ‘I have an opportunity to thank you for the affection you have flattered me with the hopes of, but at the same time must complain of the little proofs you give me of it; — the greatest stranger to your heart would be allowed the privilege of a salute, yet I am denied the pleasure of touching those dear lips, which have denounced my happiness.’ — ‘Do not reproach me,’ answered she, ‘with denying what is not yet in my power to grant; — I cannot let you see my face, and you have promised not to force me.’ — ‘I have,’ replied he; ‘but that promise binds me not from indulging my impatient wishes with things you have not stipulated: — your neck, your breasts are free, and those I will be revenged upon.’ — With these words he took some liberties with her, which may better be conceived than described; — she but faintly resisted, and, perhaps, would have permitted him to take greater thus masqued, but the discovery of her face was what he chiefly wanted; ‘You might, at least,’ cried he, ‘oblige me with a touch of those lovely lips, I am forbid to gaze upon; — here is a dark recess,’ continued he, pointing to the inner room, ‘will save your blushes.’ — He then raised her from the chair, and drawing her gently towards the door,

door, sung, in a very harmonious voice, this stanza :

- ‘ Away with this idle, this scrupulous fear,
- ‘ For a kiss in the dark,
- ‘ Cry’d the amorous spark,
- ‘ There is nothing, no nothing too dear.’

Having led her into the chamber, and seated her on the bed, which happened to be so disposed, that no gleam of light came upon it, from the candles in the next room, — ‘ Now, my charmer,’ said he, taking hold of her mask, ‘ you have no excuse for keeping on this invidious cloud.’ — ‘ How impossible is it,’ answered she, letting it fall into his hand, ‘ to refuse you any thing !’

What conversation after this passed between them, I shall leave to the reader’s imagination, and only say, that the voice of the Incognita being more distinguishable by the button of her mask being removed, Mr. Truworth could not help thinking, he had heard before accents very like those with which he was now entertained, though where, or from what mouth they had proceeded, he was not able to recollect.

This conjecture, however, rendering him more impatient than ever for the discovery ; he omitted nothing in his power, either by words or actions, to dissuade her from re-assuming her vizard, when they should quit the scene of darkness. — ‘ How gladly would I comply,’ cried she, ‘ but that I fear —.’ ‘ Fear what !’ cried Mr. Truworth, eagerly interrupting her. — ‘ I fear to lose you,’ replied she, fondly embracing him ; — ‘ my face is already but too well known to you ; — you have often seen it, but seen it without these emotions I endeavour to inspire : — how then can I now hope it will have the effect I wish !’ — ‘ Unkindly judged,’ said he, ‘ with what

‘ what indifference soever I may have regarded
‘ you, the endearing softness, the enchanting
‘ transports you have now blessed me with,
‘ would give new charms to every feature, and
‘ make me find perfections I never saw before. —
‘ Come then,’ my goddess,’ continued he, raising
her, ‘ shine with full lustre on me, and fix me
‘ your adorer.’ — ‘ Well,’ cried she, ‘ you are
‘ not to be resisted, and I will venture.’

These words brought them to the chamber
door, and shewed the Incognita to her amazed
gallant, to be no other than Miss Flora. — ‘ Miss
‘ Flora Mellasin! — Good heavens!’ cried he.
‘ — You seem surpris’d and shock’d,’ said she :
‘ — ‘ alas! my apprehensions were too just.’ —
‘ Pardon me, madam,’ answered he, ‘ I am in-
‘ deed surpris’d, but it is through an excess of
‘ joy ; — could I have ever thought, the favours
‘ I have received were bestowed by the amiable
‘ Miss Flora Mellasin!’

It is certain, that his astonishment at first was
very great ; but recovering himself from it in a
short time, a thousand passages in Miss Flora’s
former behaviour towards him occurred to his re-
membrance, and made him wonder at himself
for not having sooner found her out, in the person
of his Incognita. — They pass’d their time,
till the night was pretty far advanced, in a man-
ner very agreeable to each other, nor parted with-
out reciprocal assurance of renewing this tender
intercourse the next day, at the same place.

C H A P. XLV.

Gives an account of a farther, and more laudable motive, to induce Mr. Trueworth to put off his intended journey into the country.

THOUGH it is impossible for a man of sense to have any real love for a woman whom he cannot esteem, yet Mr. Trueworth found enough in the agreeable person and sprightly humour of miss Flora, to dissipate those uneasy reflections, which, in spite of him, had lurked in his mind, on Miss Betsey's account: — the amour with this fond girl afforded him a pleasing amusement for a time, and, without filling his heart with a new passion, cleared it of those remains of his former one, which he had taken so much pains to extirpate.

Whenever he thought of Miss Betsey, as it was impossible a young lady, he once had loved with so much tenderness, should not sometimes come into his thoughts, it was only with a friendly concern for her imagined fall. — ‘It is no wonder,’ would he often say to himself, ‘that so young, and lovely a creature, under the tuition of a woman of lady Mellasin’s character, and the constant companion of one of miss Flora’s disposition, endued with charms to excite the warmest wishes, and unprovided with sufficient arms for her defence, should have yielded to the temptations of an unwarrantable flame.’ — In fine, he pitied her, but no more.

Thus entirely freed from all prepossession, and his heart almost in the same situation, as before he never knew what it was to love, he was easily persuaded by his friends to give over all thoughts of going into the country, and stay to partake, in a moderate way, those pleasures of the town, which

which the many uneasy moments he had sustained, during his courtship with Miss Betsy, had kept him hitherto from having any relish for.

But this state of indifference lasted not long, — an object presented itself to him, inspiring him with a passion, which had so much of reason for its guide, as made him think it rather his glory, than his misfortune, to be a second time enslaved.

Among all the friends and acquaintance he had in town, there was none he more valued and esteemed, than sir Basil Loveit: — they had been for some time inseparable companions; but accidents, either on the one side or the other, having hindered their meeting for several days, Mr. Trueworth went one morning to visit him at his house: — he found him at home, but the hall so incumbered with trunks and boxes, that there was scarce a passage to the parlour door. —

‘Welcome, my dear friend,’ said sir Basil, who, having seen him from a window, run down stairs to receive him; ‘you find me in a strange disorder here, but I have got a couple of women out of the country, and that sex, I think, like a general officer, can never move without a waggon load of trumpery at their tail.’ — ‘What, married!’ cried Mr. Trueworth. — ‘No faith,’ said the other, ‘but the arrival of two sisters last night from Staffordshire, gives me a sort of specimen of the hurry I am to expect when I become a husband.’

‘The hurry,’ said Mr. Trueworth, ‘you seem to complain of, must needs be a very agreeable one, and I heartily congratulate you upon it. — A single man, like you, makes but a very solitary figure, in a great wild house; — these ladies will fill the vacuum, and give a double life to your family.’ — ‘Nay,’ resumed sir Basil, ‘I shall not have them long with me, — they hate London,

‘ London, and never come but once in two years, to buy cloaths, and see fashions ; — besides one of them is married, and the other so fond of her sister, that I believe she would not quit her to be a dutchess. — Indeed it is not much to be wondered at, our mother dying when she was very young. Harriot, for so she is called, was brought up under her sister, who is eight years older than herself, and they never have been asunder two days in their lives.’

Mr. Truworth then expatiated on the amiableness of such an harmony between persons of the same blood ; to which Sir Basil replied, that it was more than ordinarily fortunate for his sisters ; — ‘ for,’ said he, ‘ the elder of them being married just before my mother’s death, my father committed to her the care of the younger, as she was reckoned a woman of greater prudence than might be expected from her years. — My brother Wellair, for that is the name of the gentleman she married, though a very good husband in the main, is a great sportsman, takes rather too much delight in his hawks and hounds, and gives his wife but little of his company in the day, so that if it were not for Harriot she would pass her time uncomfortably enough. — In fine, the younger is improved by the lessons of the elder, and the elder diverted by the sprightliness and good humour of the younger.’

Sir Basil, who had an extreme regard for his sisters, could not forbear entertaining Mr. Truworth on this subject all the time he was there, and at parting told him, he would not ask him to stay dinner that day, because he supposed they would be very busy in unpacking their things, and setting themselves in order, but engaged him to come on the following.

Mr. Truworth thought no farther on what had passed, than to remember his promise, which he accordingly fulfilled. — Sir Basil received him with open arms, and conducted him into the dining-room, where the two ladies were sitting: — they were both very handsome: — the elder was extremely graceful, and, at first glance, appeared to be the most striking beauty of the two; but on a second, the younger had the advantage: — she was not altogether so tall as her sister, nor had a skin of that dazzling whiteness, but her shape was exquisite, — her complexion clear, — her eyes sparkling, — all her features perfectly regular, and accompanied with a sweetness, which had in it somewhat irresistably attractive.

After the first compliments were over, neither of them lost, by their manner of conversation, any part of that admiration which their eyes had gained. — Mrs. Wellair talked pretty much, yet so agreeably, that no body could be tired of hearing her: — Miss Harriot spoke much less, but all she said discovered a delicacy of sentiment, and a judgement far above her years. — Sir Basil had a large estate, he lived up to the height of it, had a very elegant taste, and in complaisance to his sisters, as well as to his friend, who had never dined with him before since he set up house-keeping, and had taken care that day to omit nothing in his bill of fare, that could excite, or gratify, the most luxurious appetite; yet it was the wit, spirit, and good humour of the company, especially of miss Harriot, which, to Mr. Truworth, made the most agreeable part of the entertainment.

When the desert was over, and the healths of absent friends toasted in Tokay and Frontiniac, they all adjourned into the drawing-room, where coffee and tea were soon after brought in; — Mrs.

Wellair having been advised by her physicians to
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refrain the use of any of these liquors, on account of some disorder she had complained of, took this opportunity of desiring leave to retire, in order to acquaint her husband, it being post-night, with her safe arrival in town.

Agreeable as her conversation was, Mr. Trueworth found no miss of her, as the lovely Harriot was left behind: — on the contrary, he was rather rejoiced, in the hope she would now give her tongue a greater latitude than she had done in the presence of one, whom he easily perceived, she looked upon as her superior in understanding, as well as years; and to provoke her to it, artfully introduced some discourse on the pleasures of the town, and said to sir Basil, it seemed to him a kind of miracle, that so young and beautiful a lady, as miss Harriot, could content herself with the obscurity of a country life. — ‘ Few of her age, indeed,’ replied Sir Basil, ‘ would choose to live in the manner she does, but though I should, perhaps, not be of the same way of thinking, if I were a woman, and in her place, yet I cannot but say, my reason approves of her conduct in this point.’

‘ London,’ said she, is a very magnificent, opulent city, and those who have their lot cast to live in it, may, doubtless, find sufficient to content them; but as for those amusements, which you gentlemen call the pleasures of the town, and which so many people take every winter such long journies merely to enjoy, I can see nothing in them, which a reasonable person may not very well dispense with the want of.’

‘ What think you of the court, madam?’ cried Mr. Trueworth. — ‘ As of a place I would always chuse to avoid,’ replied she; — ‘ I heartily pity the fatigue of those, who are obliged to attend, and am tempted to laugh at the stupidity of

‘ of those, who undertake it without necessity. —
 ‘ I am amazed to think how any one of common
 ‘ sense can be at so great an expence for rich
 ‘ cloaths, to go to a place where she must suffer
 ‘ as great pain in shewing them. — Bless me !
 ‘ to stand for two or three hours together, mute as
 ‘ a fish, — upright as an arrow, and when the
 ‘ scene is over, walk backward like a crab, curtsy-
 ‘ ing at every step, though their legs are so tired,
 ‘ they are scarce able to go through the ceremony.’

‘ A masquerade then,’ resumed Mr. Trueworth,
 willing to try her farther, ‘ what say you, madam,
 ‘ to a masquerade ? I hope you will allow no
 ‘ freedom of behaviour is wanting there.’ — ‘ I
 ‘ should like a masquerade extremely,’ answered
 she, ‘ if conducted in the same manner I have
 ‘ been told they are in Italy, and some other places,
 ‘ where only persons of condition are admitted,
 ‘ and none presumes to say that under a vizard,
 ‘ which he either would, or ought to be ashamed
 ‘ of, when it is pluck’d off ; — but the venal ones
 ‘ you have here, are my utter detestation ; — they
 ‘ seem to me to licence, under a shew of innocent
 ‘ diversion, not only folly, but all kind of pro-
 ‘ phaness, and indecency.’

‘ It must be owned, madam,’ said Mr. Trueworth,
 ‘ that your sentiments on both these subjects are
 ‘ extremely just, but you can have no such objec-
 ‘ tion against a play, or opera.’ — ‘ No, sir,’ an-
 swered she, ‘ I look upon a good play as one of
 ‘ the most improving, as well as agreeable enter-
 ‘ tainments, a thinking mind can take : — and as
 ‘ for an opera,’ — ‘ Aye sister,’ cried Sir Basil,
 interrupting her, ‘ the opera, — take care what
 ‘ you say of the opera ; — my friend here is a
 ‘ passionate lover of musick, and if you utter one
 ‘ syllable against his favourite science, you will
 ‘ certainly pass in his opinion for a stoic.’ — ‘ I

‘ should deserve it,’ said she, ‘ and be in reality
‘ as insensible as that sect of philosophers affect to
‘ be, if I were not capable of being touched by
‘ the charms of harmony.’

‘ Then, madam,’ said Mr. Truworth, ‘ there
‘ are two of the pleasures of London, which are
‘ so happy to receive your approbation.’ — ‘ Not
‘ only my approbation,’ replied she, ‘ but my
‘ applause. — I am, indeed, a very great ad-
‘ mirer of both, yet can find ways to make myself
‘ easy, without being present at either, and, at
‘ the distance of a hundred miles, enjoy in theory
‘ all the satisfaction the representation could af-
‘ ford.’

‘ This is somewhat extraordinary, indeed, ma-
‘ dam,’ cried Mr. Truworth; be so good as to
‘ let us know by what method.’ — It is this, sir,
answered she; ‘ — as for the plays, — I have
‘ a very good collection of the old ones by me,
‘ and have all the new ones sent down to me as
‘ they come out; — when I was last in London,
‘ I was several times at the theatre, — I observed
‘ how the actors and actresses varied their voices
‘ and gestures, according to the different charac-
‘ ters they appeared in on the stage; — and thus,
‘ whilst I am reading any play, am enabled to
‘ judge pretty near how it shews in representation.
‘ — I have, indeed, somewhat more difficulty
‘ in bringing the opera home to me, yet I am so
‘ happy, as to be able to procure a shadow of it
‘ at least; — we have two or three gentlemen in
‘ the neighbourhood, who play to great perfec-
‘ tion on the violin, and several ladies, who have
‘ very pretty voices, and some skill in music; —
‘ my sister touches the bass-viol finely, and I play
‘ a little on the harpsichord; — we have all our
‘ parts in score before us, which we execute to
‘ the best of our power: — it serves, however,
‘ to

‘to divert ourselves, and those friends who think it worth their while to come to hear us.’

Mr. Truworth cried out, in a kind of rapture, as soon as she had done speaking, — ‘Who would not think himself happy to be one of the audience at such a performance?’ — He was going on, but Mrs. Wellair returned, on which he directed the compliment he was about to make miss Harriot, equally to the other ; — which she returned with a great deal of politeness. — The conversation afterwards turned on different subjects, and was very entertaining ; — some other company coming in, Mr. Truworth would have taken leave, but sir Basil would not permit him — he stayed the whole evening, and when he went home, carried with him such an idea of the lovely Harriot’s perfections, that scarce any consideration would have been powerful enough to have made him quit the town, while she continued in it.

C H. A P. XLVI.

Returns to miss Betsy’s adventures, from which the two former were but a digression, though a very necessary one, as will hereafter appear.

IF Miss Betsy had been made acquainted with the manner in which Mr. Truworth passed his time, and the inducements he had to stay in London, doubtless her vanity would have been highly piqued ; but she had not as yet this subject for mortification ; on the contrary, she rather imagined he lingered here on her account, — that he repented him of the letter he had sent her, though his spirit was too great to acknowledge it directly, and waited the arrival of her

brother Frank, in hopes of engaging him to make his peace.

With these suggestions did she please herself, whenever he came into her mind ; but indeed she had but little room for meditation on his account ; — not only Mr. Munden plied her close with presents, — treats, — fine speeches, and all the tokens of impatient love, but she had also another conquest of a more late, and consequently to a young lady of her humour, a more pleasing era.

She had been one day at her mantua-maker's, to consult on some matters relating to her dress, and was a little surprised to see the woman come the next morning, before she was out of bed, to her lodgings. — ‘ Heyday, Mrs. Modely,’ cried she, ‘ what brings you here thus early ? ’ — ‘ Indeed, madam,’ answered she, ‘ I could not well come out ; — I have eight or nine gowns in the house now, which should all have been finished, and sent home to-day : — the ladies will tear me to pieces about them, but I left all my business, and run away to acquaint you with a thing you little dream of. — Ah ! Miss Betsey, such a fine gentleman ! — such a vast estate ! — but ’tis no wonder,’ continued she, ‘ you are so pretty, that you make all the men die for you.’ — ‘ What is it you are talking on ? ’ cried Miss Betsey, ‘ prithee dear Modely explain.’ — ‘ Lord ! ’ replied the other, ‘ I am so transported, that I know not how to contain myself ; — but I will tell you, — you were yesterday at my house, — sir Frederick Fineer, who lodges in my first floor, — the sweetest and most generous gentleman that ever lived, to be sure ; — but that is nothing to the purpose, — he saw you from his dining-room window, when you came out of your chair, — and, would you believe it, was
‘ so

‘so struck, that he immediately fell down in a swoon: — you were but just gone, when his valet de chambre, for he keeps three servants, two in livery, and one out, came down to me, and fetched me to his master.’ — ‘Oh! Mrs. Modely,’ said he to me, ‘what angel have you got below? — Tell me who she is? — If she is not already married, I will give my whole estate to obtain her. — I ask not what her fortune is, — if I could once call that divine creature my wife, she should command all I am worth.’

‘Indeed, madam,’ continued she, ‘I was so much amazed, that I had not the power of speaking; and he, I suppose, interpreting my silence as a refusal of answering his demands, fell into such distractions, — such ravings, as frightened me almost out of my wits, and at last, to quiet him, I told him, — I hope you will forgive me, — your name, and where you lived, and that you were not married: — on this he seemed pretty easy, and I left him; — but about two hours after, he sent for me again, — desired I would go directly to you, — make you a declaration of love in his name, and beg you to give him leave to visit you in person.’

‘Bless me!’ cried Miss Betsey, ‘can the man neither speak, nor write for himself?’ — ‘I told him, madam,’ resumed Mrs. Modely, ‘that it would not be well taken from me; — but he was quite mad, would listen to no reason, till I bethought myself of a stratagem, which, I fancy, you will not disapprove: — I made him believe, that there was no need of my going to you, — that you were to call upon me about a gown this afternoon, — that I would persuade you to stay and drink tea, and he might come in to the room, as if by chance, and entertain you with what discourse he thought proper. — Now

‘I would

‘ I would fain have you come,’ pursued she ; ‘ for
 ‘ if you do but like his person, such an offer is not
 ‘ to be rejected.’

‘ I do not regard the offer,’ said miss Betsey ;
 ‘ but I do not know but I may come just to divert
 ‘ myself a little.’—‘That’s a dear good lady,’ cried
 ‘ the other.—About five, I believe, will be a pro-
 ‘ per time.’—‘Aye thereabout,’ replied miss Bet-
 ‘ sy ; ‘ but, dear Modely, don’t let him know you
 ‘ have spoke a word to me concerning him.’—‘No,
 ‘ —no, said she, I shall not tell him I have seen
 ‘ you.’

During the whole time this woman staid, which was, indeed, much longer than might have been expected, from a person of that extraordinary business she pretended, nothing was talked on but sir Frederick Fineer ; — she told Miss Betsey, that to her certain knowledge, he was of one of the best families in Cornwall ; that he had a great estate in possession, and another in reversion, and, besides, was the next of kin to a coronet ; that he kept company with nothing but lords and dukes, and that they were always courting his company.

Though miss Betsey affected to treat all she said with indifference, yet she had given an attentive ear to it, and after she was gone, began to rumage over all her ornaments,—tryed one, and then another, to see which would become her best, in order to secure a victory, which she imagined would afford so much triumph.—‘ Whether I
 ‘ marry him or not,’ said she to herself, ‘ the ad-
 ‘ dresses of a man of his rank will make me of
 ‘ some consideration in the world ; — and if ever
 ‘ I do become a wife, I should like to be a wo-
 ‘ man of quality ; — they may say what they will,
 ‘ but a title has prodigious charms in it ; — the
 ‘ name of Fineer also becomes it ; — lady Fineer’s
 ‘ servants there ! — lady Fineer’s coach to the door,
 ‘ would

‘ would sound vastly agreeable at the play or opera.’

She also pleased herself with the thought, that being courted by a person of sir Frederick’s quality, and estate, would immediately put to silence all the reproaches and remonstrances she might otherwise have expected to be persecuted with, by her brother Frank, on Mr. Truworth’s account; — and this imagination was, of itself, sufficient to give her an infinite satisfaction : — in fine, she found so much in this new effect of her charms, to elevate and delight both her vanity and convenience, that she longed with as much impatience for a sight of her admirer, as Mrs. Modely had told her he was under, for an interview with her.

Some part of the tedious moments were, however, taken up, in a manner she was far from expecting : — she was scarce risen from her toilette, when word was brought her, that a young lady, who called herself Miss Flora Mellasin, was come to wait upon her. As she had never seen her since her being driven from Mr. Goodman’s, the visit a little surprised her, and she would have been glad, if common civility had dispensed with her receiving it; for though the pity she then had felt for her misfortunes, had greatly effaced the memory of the injurious treatment she had met with from her, yet she never desired to continue any correspondence with her, after they were once parted : besides, as she had no reason to look upon her coming as any proof of her friendship or good-will, but rather with a design of doing her some private prejudice, she resolved to behave entirely reserved towards her.

Her conjectures were not groundless : — that complication of every worst passion that can fill the human heart, could not be perfectly satisfied, even amidst the most unbounded gratification of her

her amorous desires, with the man that had excited them : — the dread of losing him embittered all the transports of possession ; she very well knew he had broke off with Miss Betsey, and doubted not but that event had happened through the artifice she had put in practice ; yet as there was a possibility, that the adventure of Denham should be unravelled, and the innocency of Miss Betsey cleared up, she trembled lest such an eclclaircissement should renew all his former tenderness for that once so much loved rival, and herself be reduced to all the horrors of despair and shame. — It was, therefore, to sound the inclination of Miss Betsey, that alone brought her thither, in the wicked hope, that if there was the least probability of a reconciliation between them, she might find some opportunity of traversing all the steps that might be taken by either party for that purpose.

But Miss Betsey was too much upon her guard, to give her any room to discover what her sentiments were in that point : — she received her very coolly, and even on her first entrance told her, that she was obliged to go out that evening ; but the other taking no notice of the little pleasure Miss Betsey expressed on seeing her, told her, she came out of friendship to visit her ; — that she had been told Mr. Truworth and she were entirely parted ; — that if she had so great an affection for him, as the world had been pleased to say, she must certainly stand in need of all the consolation could be given her : — ‘ but, I hope, ‘ my dear,’ said she, ‘ you have too much good ‘ sense, not to despise him now. Nothing is more ‘ common than that men should be false. — Remember what the poet says :

‘ Ingratitude’s the sin, which, first or last,

‘ Taints the whole sex ; the catching court-disease.’

Miss

Miss Betsy was so provoked at being talked to in this manner, that she replied, That there was neither falshood nor ingratitude in the case; — if Mr. Truworth had desisted his visits, it was only because he was convinced she desired not the continuance of them.

'Tis possible these words were more galling to the jealous heart of Miss Flora, than any thing she could have said, though she spoke them with no other intent, than to clear herself of the imputation of having been forsaken; — a thing she looked upon as the worst blemish that could be cast upon her reputation. — Miss Flora finding no more was to be got out of her, took her leave for this time, resolving, however, in her own mind, to keep up an acquaintance with her; that seeming, to her, the most likely way, both to satisfy her curiosity, and prevent any effort of what the extravagance of her passion made her apprehend.

Miss Betsy did not give herself much trouble in reflecting on what Miss Flora had said, but as soon as her watch reminded her of the appointed hour, she bid her footman fly and get a chair: — on her coming to the house, Mrs. Modely herself opened the door at the first rap, and desired her to walk in. — 'No, — no,' said Miss Betsy, still sitting in the chair, 'I cannot stay, — I only called to tell you, that I will have the silver robings put upon the green night-gown, and will buy a new trimming for the pink.' — 'I shall be sure to obey your orders, madam,' replied the other; 'but I must intreat you will do me the honour to come in, and drink a dish of tea, — the kettle boils, and I have just now had a present of a canister of some of the finest hyson in the world.' — 'I must leave you then as soon as I have tasted it,' said Miss Betsy, coming out of the chair,

chair, 'for I have twenty visits to make this evening.'

She had not been three minutes in the parlour, when the person, for whom all this ceremony was affected, entered the room in somewhat of an abrupt manner, — 'I come, Mrs. Modely, to complain,' said he; — 'my servants tell me.' — With these words he stopped short, and fixed his eyes full on miss Betsey, with a kind of astonishment. — Mrs. Modely pretending to be in a great fright, cried, 'For heaven's sake, sir Frederick, what is the matter? — I hope nothing in my house has given your honour any cause of complaint?' — 'No, no, 'tis over now,' cried he, 'your house is become a temple, and this is the divinity that honours it with her presence; — this Græcian Venus.' — Miss Betsey was too much accustomed to company to be easily abashed, and answered briskly, 'if you mean the compliment to me, sir, the Græcian Venus's are all painted fat, and I have no resemblance of that perfection.' — 'Only in your face, madam,' returned he; — such sparkling eyes, — such a complexion, — such a mouth; — in your shape you are a Helen of Troy.' — 'That Helen of Troy,' said Miss Betsey, with an ironical smile, 'I think was a Græcian princess, and must also be fat, or she would not have been reputed a beauty there.'

The baronet finding by this, he had been guilty of an absurdity, when he intended a fine speech, thought to salve up the matter by saying, 'Sure you are Diana then.' — 'Worse and worse,' cried Miss Betsey; — 'I beseech you, sir,' compare me to no such boisterous goddess, that runs up and down, bare footed and bare leg'd, hunting wild boars in the forest!' — 'What shall I call you then,' resumed he? — 'O! tell me by what

‘ what name you will be worshipped ? ’ — ‘ The lady’s name, sir Frederick,’ cried Mrs. Modely hastily, ‘ is Miss Betsy Thoughtless.’ — ‘ Betsy,’ said he ? ‘ then Betsy let it be. — Betsy shall henceforth become more famous than Cytherea was of old.’

He was going on with this fulsome stuff, in which he was often exposed by the ready wit of Miss Betsy, when a maid belonging to the house came in, and told her that a gentleman in a hackney coach was at the door, and desired to speak with her. — ‘ With me ! ’ — cried she, not able to guess who should have followed her there, ‘ pray call my footman, and bid him ask the person’s name that enquires for me.’ — The maid did as she was ordered, and Miss Betsy’s servant presently after brought her this intelligence, — ‘ Mr. Munden, madam,’ said he, ‘ not finding you at home, has taken the liberty to call on you here, in order to conduct you where you are to pass the evening.’ — ‘ He must be a happy man, indeed, dare take such liberties,’ cried sir Frederick, somewhat fiercely. — ‘ Many take more than they are allowed to do,’ said Miss Betsy. — ‘ Go,’ continued she, ‘ to the fellow, and tell him, my mind is changed, — that I cannot leave the company I am with, and will not go.’ — Mr. Munden having received this message, ordered the coachman to drive away, very much dissatisfied, as the reader may easily suppose

Miss Betsy, the day before, had agreed to pass this evening with the ladies at St. James’s, and some others, to play at commerce, a game then very much in vogue ; — Mr. Munden was to be one of the company, and calling at Miss Betsy’s lodgings, in hopes of having some time with her before this meeting, the maid, who had not lived long enough with her mistress to know her hu-

mour, presently told him, she was only gone to her mantua-maker's, and gave him directions to the house; he also thinking it no indecorum to call on her at the house of a woman of that profession, had reason enough to be mortified at the rebuff he met with for so doing.

As to Miss Berfy, though she was a little angry at the freedom Mr. Munden had taken, yet she was in reality much more pleased; — and this for two reasons: — first, because she saw it gave her new lover some jealous apprehensions; and, secondly, because it furnished her with a plausible pretence for complying with his entreaties to stay, which she protested, she would not on any terms have been prevailed upon to do, but to prevent either him, or Mrs. Modely, from suspecting she would go where Mr. Munden had desired.

Mrs. Modely went out of the room several times, as if called away by some household affairs, that sir Frederick might have an opportunity of declaring his passion to Miss Berfy, which he did in much the same rodomontade strain, with which he had at first accosted her. — A handsome supper was served in, after which, she being about to take her leave, he affected to be in a great fret, that a fine new chariot which, he said, he had bespoke, was not come home, that he might have seen her safe to her lodgings, with an equipage suitable to her merit, and the admiration he had of it: — he would needs, however, attend her in another chair; which piece of gallantry, after a few faint refusals, she accepted.

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